

Better Homes & Gardens®

Ask Us
Anything!

OUR SECOND
ANNUAL Q&A
ISSUE

A Lucky
New Year's
Brunch
p. 76

Q

My bedroom
is boring. How
can I add color
and style?

KIMBERLY PILKINGTON
Muncie, IN

A

Flip to page 26
for advice on
space planning,
no-fail paint
colors, and all
things pillows.

Plus Strategies for working from home,
managing money & cleaning where it counts



EXPECT BETTER[®]

It's the beautiful, little moments in life that give us hope for the future. At Better Homes and Gardens[®] Real Estate, we remain focused on what matters most: helping you live your best life. When it's time to make your dreams come true, we'll be here for you.



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PHOTOS: (FISH AND CAKE) CARSON DOWNING, (BED) DAVID A. LAND/PAT BATES, (OFFICE) DANA GALLAGHER
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**Do what's
delicious.**

EDITOR'S LETTER



PROBLEM-SOLVING

There are always going to be issues to deal with—but 2020 gave us a lot of them. My brain has been taking refuge in more immediately fixable problems instead of the long-range uncertainties we've all been navigating. And you seem to feel the same. Our readers tell us they've been paying extra-close attention to something they can control—perfecting their home spaces. This past weekend, I roasted a chicken one day and made stock the next, tackled a closet, and reorganized the bathroom toiletries. And normally I'm not a neatnik. Each of these tasks, however, felt like an accomplishment—like I was finally in control.

That's what this, our second annual Q&A issue, is all about. Instead of us doing the normal January, “New Year, New You” magazine, where we tell you what you *should* be doing, we crowdsourced to find out what solutions *you* need. It's always fascinating to hear what's on your minds. We heard that women are stressed—juggling parenting, working from home, and dealing with COVID. But among all the disruption there have been upsides too. We're all traveling and running around less, so we're spending more time with our families cooking and doing DIY projects. We want to tackle long-neglected home improvements or get our front yard pulled together but feel afraid of making a mistake and wasting money. We want to upgrade a bedroom but don't know where to begin. We want to cook a nice meal for our loved ones but need the inspiration of new ideas and recipes.

This issue has become one of our favorites because it combines two vital things: the real-life concerns of our readers and the knowledge and expertise of our editors and designers. Journalists, by nature, are sharers. If we find something cool, beautiful, or useful, we want to tell you about it. That's why we editors get into this media business. We want to help everyone have a better life when it comes to the ultimate sanctuary—their home.

STEPHEN ORR,
Editor in Chief
instagram @steporr

LETTERS + COMMENTS BHGEditor@meredith.com SUBSCRIPTION HELP [BHG.com/MyAccount](https://www.bhg.com/MyAccount)
or email us at BHGcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com or call 800/374-4244

"THANK YOU
very much
FOR LETTING



BECOME A
LITTLE PART
OF YOUR
Holiday.

Jimmy Dean





STORAGE GOALS

Level up your storage game for the new year. We break down the most common storage mistakes, including overstuffing shelves and using only one type of container, and how to fix them.

BHG.com/StorageMistakes

DIY Spice Organizer

Cook without chaos. Our quick weekend project guides you through sorting and storing herbs and spices so they're clearly visible.

BHG.com/OrganizeSpices



Hover your smartphone camera over this code for our how-to video.

[SWEEPSTAKES]

**Win
\$25,000**
to design the kitchen of your dreams. Enter at **BHG.com/25kKitchen** for a chance to win. Details on page 95.

Healthier Desserts

These 13 indulgent treats weigh in under 250 calories and are sneakily nutritious. Dig into a flavonoid-rich dark chocolate option or these pumpkin empanadas packed with immune-boosting vitamins A and C.

BHG.com/WinterSweet



[SPECIAL READER OFFER]

Travel+Leisure Luggage

Travel in style with gear designed by leading luggage brand Travelpro in collaboration with the travel experts at Travel + Leisure®. The nine-piece collection contains four hard-sided suitcases and five soft companion bags in Monaco Blue, Whistler Grey, or White Sand (shown). Mix and match to build a combo that fits your needs, or choose a set. Individual bags range from \$245 to \$645. **travelpro.com/travel-leisure**



WHEN *you're* READY,
WE'RE READY.

DISCOVER

South Carolina



You Asked, We Answered

WELCOME TO OUR SECOND ANNUAL READER Q&A ISSUE, BRINGING YOU REAL SOLUTIONS TO DAY-TO-DAY DILEMMAS.

Last year we introduced our first reader Q&A issue, answering some of the most common questions we get from readers about home design, cooking, gardening, health, and beauty. Since then the questions have kept flooding in. So we're making it an annual event. In this issue, our editors and go-to experts aim to help you solve a whole new slew of problems. Don't see your question in this issue? Send it to the editors at Ask.BHG@meredith.com, and we might answer it in a future issue.

Q "Outfitting my house on a budget: Where to splurge, where to save?"

MAUREEN GREELEY
Olympia, WA

A Splurge on foundation items and things you touch every day, says designer Elaine Griffin, like a sofa, mattresses, and bedding. Save on items reflecting trends: lamps, pillows, area rugs.

Q "What are some kid- and pet-friendly fabrics for in the house?"

RENEE
Missouri

A Leather is ideal when you have pets, says interior designer Kimberly Kelly, who fosters dogs. Interior designer and mom Rachel Van Kluyve loves velvet. "It's hard to beat the wear and

tear it can take," she says. Or try using a stylish outdoor fabric for pillows and upholstery. Whatever you choose, a medium shade—not too dark or too light—hides stains best.

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**BROOKE
BURKE**



“How do I up the natural light in a room with few windows?”

SHARON RUB
Hillsboro, OR

“White walls, more than anything, bounce light around the room and disperse it,” says stylist Brady Tolbert. Hanging artwork framed behind reflective glass and mirrors on adjacent walls also will refract light. Minimally dress the windows with sheer curtains.

And choose furnishings that help with the glow: A sisal area rug and a sofa slipcovered in ivory linen can brighten a room too.



“My nail polish doesn’t stay on past a few days. Any suggestions?”

SARA POLLAND, Brooklyn, NY

Hand sanitizer to the rescue! Nail artist Miss Pop says swipe a cotton pad dipped in sanitizer across the nail bed to remove natural oils before applying a base coat. “A base coat helps your manicure last longer,” she says. After polishing, apply a top coat, even another layer a few days later.

And remember: “Don’t shower, wash your hands, or wash dishes for a couple hours after painting your nails.”



“How do you eat less salt and have food still taste good?”

PATTY AMORE
Pompano Beach, FL

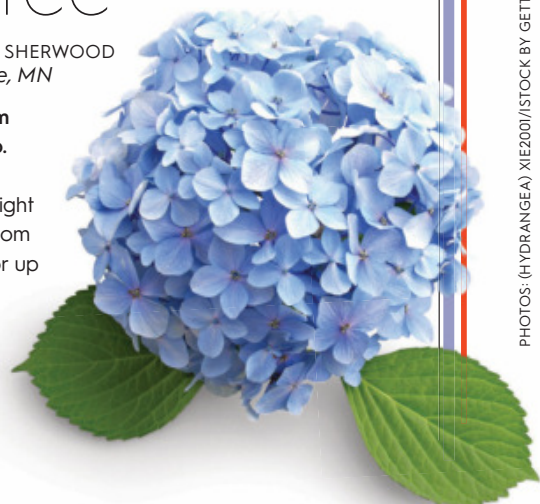
“Salt is a learned flavor,” says Caitlyn Diimig, R.D. The good news is that we can learn to want less of it. She suggests using acidic ingredients like citrus, vinegars, or wine to bring out other flavors in a dish. Keep your taste buds happy by balancing sweet, sour, salty, and bitter. “People add salt to bland dishes, but the dish is missing all of the tastes; that’s why it’s bland,” she says.



“HOW DO I GET HYDRANGEAS TO TURN BLUE?”

KIM O'BRIEN-WOLETT
Des Moines

This is one of the questions we hear most from visitors to the BH&G Test Garden.* The first step is knowing what type of hydrangea you have, says Ryan McEnaney of Bailey Nurseries. Only the bigleaf varieties will turn blue and even then only certain cultivars. If you’ve looked up your cultivar and it is one apt to change color, the fix is simple: You just need to make your soil more acidic by applying aluminum sulfate, often sold at garden centers specifically for hydrangeas. Add it to soil following package directions right after you see buds and through the bloom season. Be aware that flowers may not turn blue until the following year.



Q “Can you use gluten-free flour like regular flour?”

BEVERLY SHERWOOD
Roseville, MN

A Unfortunately you can’t swap a single-ingredient alternative flour (like almond or buckwheat) in for all-purpose flour, says food editor Carrie Boyd. “You need to use a replacement

that will mimic the texture and structure gluten provides.” You can, however, sub in a mix. We developed and rigorously tested a cup-for-cup gluten-free flour mix in our Better Homes &

Gardens® Test Kitchen. Mix a batch—or double or triple it—to keep on hand.

GLUTEN-FREE FLOUR MIX

In a large bowl whisk together **3 cups white rice flour, 3 cups potato starch,**

2 cups sorghum flour, and 4 tsp. xanthan gum.

Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 months. ■

ECZEMA: UNDER CONTROL. SO ROLL UP THOSE SLEEVES.

DUPIXENT is a breakthrough in the treatment of uncontrolled moderate-to-severe eczema (atopic dermatitis).

Approved for ages 6 years and up.

HELP
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SKIN
FROM
WITHIN

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DUPIXENT
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INDICATION

DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used to treat people aged 6 years and older with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis (eczema) that is not well controlled with prescription therapies used on the skin (topical), or who cannot use topical therapies. DUPIXENT can be used with or without topical corticosteroids. It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with atopic dermatitis under 6 years of age.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Do not use if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT®.

Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you: have eye problems; have a parasitic (helminth) infection; are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a "live vaccine" if you are treated with DUPIXENT; are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby. There is a pregnancy exposure registry for women who take DUPIXENT during

pregnancy to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Your healthcare provider can enroll you or you may enroll yourself. To get more information about the registry call 1-877-311-8972 or go to <https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupilumab/>; are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you are taking oral, topical or inhaled corticosteroid medicines or if you have atopic dermatitis and asthma and use an asthma medicine. **Do not** change or stop your corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by the corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine to come back.

DUPIXENT can cause serious side effects, including:

Allergic reactions (hypersensitivity), including a severe reaction known as anaphylaxis. Stop using DUPIXENT and tell your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you get any of the following symptoms: breathing problems, fever, general ill feeling, swollen lymph nodes, swelling of the face, mouth and tongue, hives, itching, fainting, dizziness, feeling lightheaded (low blood pressure), joint pain, or skin rash.

Eye problems. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new or worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision.

The most common side effects in patients with atopic dermatitis include injection site reactions, eye and eyelid inflammation, including redness, swelling, and itching, and cold sores in your mouth or on your lips.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to

the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed. Your healthcare provider will tell you how much DUPIXENT to inject and how often to inject it. DUPIXENT is an injection given under the skin (subcutaneous injection). If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver can give DUPIXENT injections, you or your caregiver should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject DUPIXENT. **Do not** try to inject DUPIXENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider. In children 12 years of age and older, it is recommended that DUPIXENT be administered by or under supervision of an adult. In children younger than 12 years of age, DUPIXENT should be given by a caregiver.

Please see Brief Summary on next page.

SANOFI GENZYME  REGENERON

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YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR COPAY ASSISTANCE*

*Limitations apply. Visit [DUPIXENT.com](https://www.dupilumab.com) for full program terms.

Brief Summary of Important Patient Information about DUPIXENT® (dupilumab) Rx Only (DU-pix'-ent) injection, for subcutaneous use

What is DUPIXENT?

- DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used:
 - to treat people aged 6 years and older with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis (eczema) that is not well controlled with prescription therapies used on the skin (topical), or who cannot use topical therapies. DUPIXENT can be used with or without topical corticosteroids.
- DUPIXENT works by blocking two proteins that contribute to a type of inflammation that plays a major role in atopic dermatitis.
- It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with atopic dermatitis under 6 years of age.

Who should not use DUPIXENT?

Do not use DUPIXENT if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT. See the end of this summary of information for a complete list of ingredients in DUPIXENT.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DUPIXENT?

Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have eye problems
- have a parasitic (helminth) infection
- are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a “live vaccine” if you are treated with DUPIXENT.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby.
 - **Pregnancy Exposure Registry.** There is a pregnancy exposure registry for women who take DUPIXENT during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Your healthcare provider can enroll you in this registry. You may also enroll yourself or get more information about the registry by calling 1 877 311-8972 or going to <https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupixent/>.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you:

- are taking oral, topical, or inhaled corticosteroid medicines
- have atopic dermatitis and asthma and use an asthma medicine

Do not change or stop your corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by the corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine to come back.

How should I use DUPIXENT?

- **See the detailed “Instructions for Use” that comes with DUPIXENT for information on how to prepare and inject DUPIXENT and how to properly store and throw away (dispose of) used DUPIXENT pre-filled syringes and pre-filled pens.**
- Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Your healthcare provider will tell you how much DUPIXENT to inject and how often to inject it.
- DUPIXENT comes as a single-dose pre-filled syringe with needle shield or as a pre-filled pen.
- DUPIXENT is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver can give the injections of DUPIXENT, you or your caregiver should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject DUPIXENT. **Do not** try to inject DUPIXENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider. In children 12 years of age and older, it is recommended that DUPIXENT be administered by or under supervision of an adult. In children younger than 12 years of age, DUPIXENT should be given by a caregiver.

- **If your dose schedule is every other week and you miss a dose of DUPIXENT:** Give the DUPIXENT injection within 7 days from the missed dose, then continue with your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 7 days, wait until the next scheduled dose to give your DUPIXENT injection.
- **If your dose schedule is every 4 weeks and you miss a dose of DUPIXENT:** Give the DUPIXENT injection within 7 days from the missed dose, then continue with your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 7 days, start a new every 4 week dose schedule from the time you remember to take your DUPIXENT injection.
- If you inject more DUPIXENT than prescribed, call your healthcare provider right away.
- Your healthcare provider may prescribe other medicines to use with DUPIXENT. Use the other prescribed medicines exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to.

What are the possible side effects of DUPIXENT?

DUPIXENT can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Allergic reactions (hypersensitivity), including a severe reaction known as anaphylaxis.** Stop using DUPIXENT and tell your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you get any of the following symptoms: breathing problems, fever, general ill feeling, swollen lymph nodes, swelling of the face, mouth and tongue, hives, itching, fainting, dizziness, feeling lightheaded (low blood pressure), joint pain, or skin rash.
- **Eye problems.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new or worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision.

The most common side effects of DUPIXENT in patients with atopic

dermatitis include: injection site reactions, eye and eyelid inflammation, including redness, swelling and itching, and cold sores in your mouth or on your lips. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

General information about the safe and effective use of DUPIXENT.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use DUPIXENT for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give DUPIXENT to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about DUPIXENT for this use. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider.

You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for more information about DUPIXENT that is written for healthcare professionals.

For more information about DUPIXENT, go to www.DUPIXENT.com or call 1-844-DUPIXENT (1-844-387-4936)

What are the ingredients in DUPIXENT?

Active ingredient: dupilumab

Inactive ingredients: L-arginine hydrochloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium acetate, sucrose, and water for injection

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Issue Date: June 2020

Q

"I want a great background in my video chats. How do I arrange that in my home?"

GAYLA BYERLY
Denton, TX

Video meetings and virtual social hours aren't going anywhere, so it's worth investing a little time in adjusting your setup. "People can see your entire background," says Mikel Welch, an interior designer and TV personality. "And your coworkers are probably a little nosy, so I treat my setup like selling a home: Keep it simple. You want people listening to the words coming out of your mouth."

■ **STARTING POINT**

A space with good lighting is essential, and natural light is best. Arrange your desk so there's a window (or decent artificial light) in front or to the side of your face, never behind you where the light will silhouette you in

darkness. It's ideal, Welch says, to set up with a wall 4 to 6 feet behind you. That's enough to show some depth without the entire room being visible. (That's a lot to keep tidy.) And, he says, "You need to create a focal point—art or bookshelves—back there."

■ **BOOKSHELVES**

"Books read smart," Welch says. "Just make sure you check the titles for anything you wouldn't want people to zoom in on." Then

style your shelves. "I think a mix of books and objects goes a long way toward the aesthetics. It's less cold and sterile, less like a library." Mikel's simple styling formula: Split each shelf 50-50, books on one side, decor on the other. Reverse the book-object layout on each shelf.

■ **ART** "I don't do family pictures as a backdrop," Mikel says. "I'm a fan of artwork." Des Moines gallerist and art adviser Liz Lidgett recommends

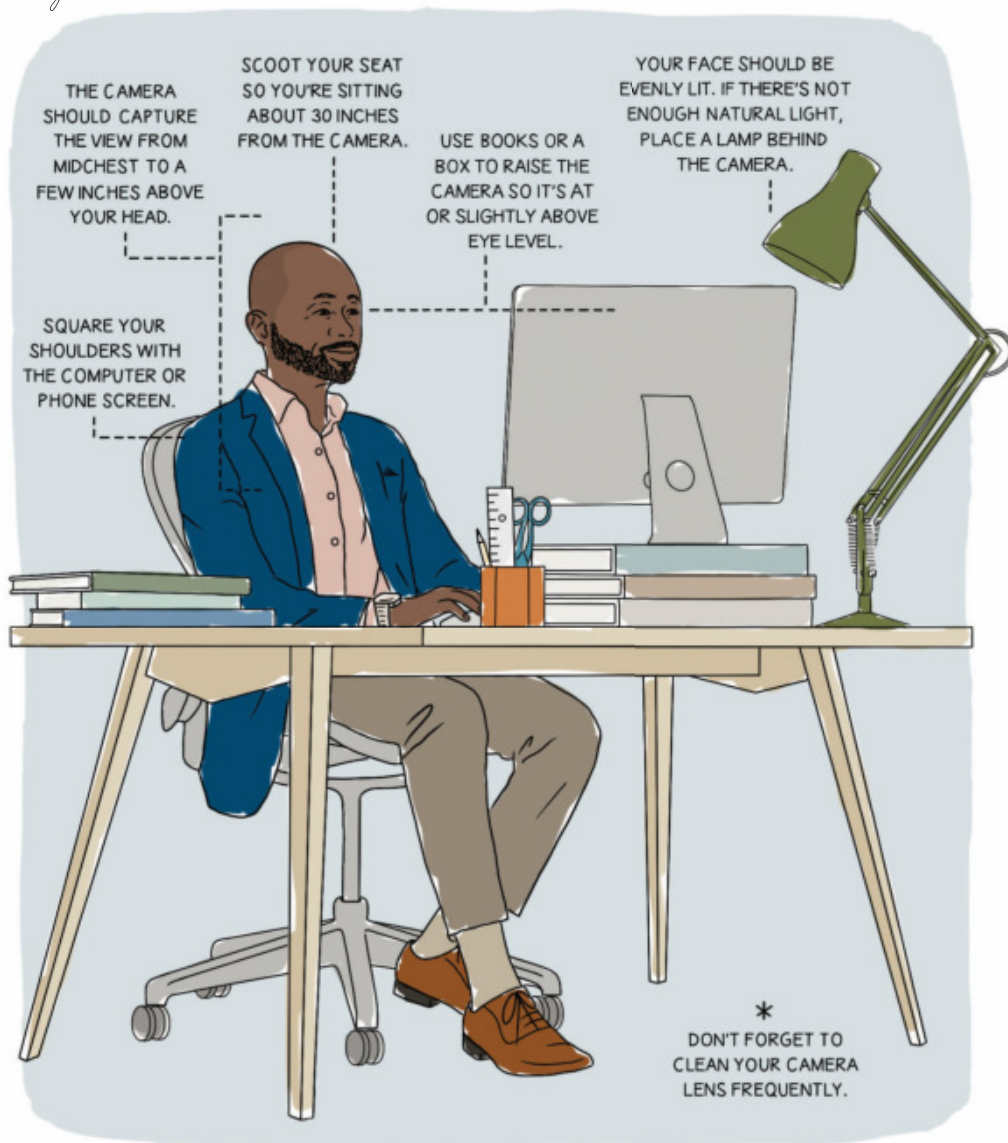
large-scale pieces that take up more of the background. Depending on your taste, she suggests a colorful abstract piece or a simple landscape picture. They're beautiful, professional-looking, and not distracting. "You don't want to leave people guessing, trying to figure out what's going on behind you," Lidgett says. Two things she says to avoid: glass-framed

pieces that will catch a light glare and anything busy that won't read well on camera. That includes gallery walls with lots of small individual pieces. ■



TIPS IN ACTION

Hover your smartphone camera here to see the Zoom-worthy makeover of our beauty editor's home office.





"How can I update our laundry room cabinets? We don't use them to their full potential, and the doors are awful."

JANICE, Bountiful, UT

COLOR-FORWARD STORAGE

"Form leads, but don't forget the fun," says Minneapolis interior designer Lucy Penfield. Her clients wanted to turn their dark basement laundry area into a happy-looking, well-functioning space. "So we added color as a pick-me-up for this everyday chore."

1

COLOR BLOCKS

Painting cabinet shelves crisp white immediately brightened the room. Mango and watermelon on the wall above the washer and on cabinet backs further lifted the mood.

2

OPEN SHELVES

Penfield popped the doors off the upper cabinets to ease getting at supplies. "Grab the detergent or spot cleaner, and off you go," she says.

3

HIDDEN STORAGE

A vibrantly patterned curtain plays up the energetic color scheme and hides clothes hanging to dry or piles waiting to be folded. "Just make sure the curtain will clear the hangers," Penfield says. The rods should be hung at a height you can reach, with the drying rod about 12 inches from the wall and the curtain rod 24-28 inches from the wall. ■





HECKIN' GÜD

/ hek-in good /
adj.

Used to describe that which is extremely desirable or enjoyable.
As in, "The hooman thinks New Fresh Step with Febreze Freshness
and Gain Scent smells HECKIN' GÜD."

FEBREZE 10-DAY ODOR CONTROL
FRESH STEP *We Speak Cat*



with
Gain
scent



ALL IN ORDER

This month our staff's best tricks for staying organized include a scheduling method that is a work of art.

↓ "I write appointments, vacation days, and photo shoot dates on washi tape that I stick on my calendar. I color-code by type of event to make it easier to read at a glance. And because washi tape is easily repositionable, I can move appointments whenever my schedule changes."

—CHRISTY BROKENS, art director



TECH SUPPORT APPS THAT MAKE LIFE EASIER

SHARED CALENDARS

"Our family relies entirely on syncing the calendars on our phones. If a conflict ever occurs, 'Well, I didn't see it in the calendar!'"
—AMY BRIGHTFIELD, health editor

BRAINTOSS

"I can type, speak, or take picture memos, and each reminder will be waiting for me in my email in-box."
—KATY KIICK CONDON, home editor

LIFE360

"It's like LoJack for my family. The location sharing lets me keep track of where my teens are and helps me guide my parents, who just moved here, around town."
—AMY PANOS, home editor



FAVORITE THINGS

PLAN ON IT

At BH&G we all have different (and strongly held) opinions about what makes an ideal planner. For Executive Editor Oma Ford, a week-at-a-glance desk planner cuts through the digital clutter. "I'm totally dependent on my electronic calendar, but a minimalist paper planner allows me to see important to-dos for the week at a glance," she says. Creative Director Jennifer Madara, on the other hand, stays motivated with a planner by designer AdamJK that bubbles over with quirky illustrations, quotes, and prompts for doodling. "I love that it gives space for creativity and celebrates that life isn't always calm and controlled," she says.

■ **Unsolicited Advice Planner**, \$25; adamjk.com ■ **Neon Pop Desk Weekly Planner**, \$20; mochithings.com

✱ **SIGN HERE** "I need flashy reminders to remember things like birthdays and work deadlines. I like these magnetic whiteboard stars because they're unmissable and reusable."

—JARRET EINCK, art director ■ **Stickies Stars**, \$20 for six; mcsquares.com ■



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beauty



Can you recommend a skincare routine that doesn't break the bank?

When we asked you for your biggest skincare questions, budget came up a *lot*. You'll be glad to know that nobody needs an expensive 10-step routine. Drugstore cleansers, moisturizers, and sunscreens are affordable and keep your skin hydrated and healthy, says NYC dermatologist Marnie Nussbaum, M.D. The cleanser you use should be gentle, meaning your skin shouldn't feel tight or dry postwash. One face cream can work for both day and night (and your neck). A tinted mineral sunscreen blurs discoloration, so you can skip foundation.

We like **Unsun Everyday Mineral Tinted Face Sunscreen** (\$16; [target.com](https://www.target.com)).



WASTE NOT

After applying cream, serum, or sunscreen to your face and neck, rub any leftover on the tops of your hands.



“Does anything work for dark undereye circles?” PAMELA MURRAY
Hancock, MD

The secret to correcting dark circles at home is figuring out their cause. For age-related shadows created by loss of collagen and fat, an eye treatment with retinol helps plump the thinning skin, making purple blood vessels less visible. Darkness may also develop from excess pigment (as from sun damage or rubbing your eyes). In that case, pick a tinted eye cream with skin-brightening ingredients like vitamin C or niacinamide. Your makeup can work to hide discoloration too. **Yunique Touch Skin Solution Concealer** (\$29; [yuniqueproducts.com](https://www.yuniqueproducts.com)) provides full camouflage along with caffeine to help increase circulation and depuff the area.

EXPERIENCE
SKIN CARE INSPIRED
BODY WASH



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CLEANSING & NOURISHING
BODY WASH



+ HYALURONIC ACID

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With ingredients
like vitamin C, collagen,
and hyaluronic acid.

Improves Skin 3x Better*

*vs. leading body wash after 14 days of use, based on clinical moisture retention.

Q

“WHAT ARE THE BEST INGREDIENTS TO HYDRATE MY FACE?”

SARAH WALL
Roanoke, VA

Two of the most buzzed-about ingredients—ceramides and hyaluronic acid—work better together. Ceramides, which are lipids naturally found in your skin barrier, lock in moisture. Hyaluronic acid is beloved by derms for its ability to draw moisture into the skin. Look for a product with both: a serum like **CeraVe Hydrating Hyaluronic Acid Serum** (\$17; walgreens.com) or a moisturizer like **AHC Aqualuronic Cream** (\$32; target.com). To get the biggest hydration boost, apply moisturizer or serum postwash while your skin is slightly damp.



VITAMIN C SERUM
Neutrogena Rapid Tone Repair 20% Vitamin C Serum, \$27; target.com

“I’m in my early 40s. What should I be using at my age for dull skin and fine lines

KRISTEN ELLISON, *New Providence, NJ*

When you start to see signs of aging, it’s time to graduate to stronger products, says NYC plastic surgeon Sachin Shridharani, M.D. A vitamin C serum in the a.m. protects against free radical damage, a skin-aging chemical reaction that occurs with exposure to the sun, indoor light, and air pollutants. Vit C also evens and brightens your skin tone by breaking up excess pigment. Two or three nights a week treat wrinkles with retinol. Try **RoC Retinol Correxion Line Smoothing Daily Serum** (\$25; walmart.com). The vitamin A derivative speeds the cycle of healthy skin cells rising to the surface of the skin (aka cell turnover) and builds supportive collagen.

Q

“Help! I have maskne.”

MOLLY ZIMBRICK
Anoka, MN

Moisture, bacteria, and oils can get trapped on your skin under your mask. Add friction from the fabric rubbing on your face, and suddenly you’ve got breakouts. If your mask is a synthetic fabric like polyester, switch to cotton, says NYC dermatologist Marina Peredo, M.D. Synthetic materials exacerbate breakouts by blocking pores. Wash with a salicylic acid cleanser twice a day to kill acne-causing bacteria. Try **Pixi Clarity Cleanser** (\$18; target.com).

SENSITIVE SKIN

Q “What are the best antiaging treatments for sensitive skin?” MOLLY FISCHER
Napa, CA

»» HYDRATING CLEANSER

A milky wash like the **Clarins Velvet Cleansing Milk** (\$30; clarinsusa.com) uses nourishing oils and mild surfactants to gently lift off dirt. A probiotic complex keeps healthy bacteria in balance.

»» RETINOID ALTERNATIVE

Biossance Squalane & Phyto-Retinol Serum (\$72; sephora.com) contains bakuchiol, the gentle plant-derived retinoid alternative that boosts cell turnover and evens skin tone.

»» PEPTIDE SERUM

Peptides (protein building blocks for collagen) smooth fine lines and are gentle on sensitive skin. **Olay Wrinkle Serum Max** (\$33; olay.com) layers in niacinamide, a dual hydrator and mild exfoliant.

»» CALMING MOISTURIZER

Oat kernel flour and plant extracts in **Aveeno Calm & Restore Oat Gel Moisturizer** (\$24; cvs.com) soothe dry, irritated skin while strengthening the skin’s protective barrier. ■



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Silhouette

NEW



Unbeatable
protection†

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underwear

In 5 exclusive
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Get a sample at Depend.com



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†based on small and medium testing vs. Always Discreet Boutique.

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COLOR

"I want to update my home color. What's a more current palette than gray?"

DAWN GRECO, Verona, IL

There's a warming trend going on in neutrals. Grays are giving way to midtone browns that are just as versatile and create the coziness we crave. These unassuming colors used to be thought of as boring, but in 2021 we're recognizing them as a comforting backdrop that works with almost any color you want to play against them.

OAK CREEK
SW 7718
Sherwin-Williams

TRANSCEND
PPG1079-4
PPG

TOFFEE CRUNCH
700D-5
Behr

GINGERSNAPS
1063
Benjamin Moore

TURBINADO
Clare

When you're living with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis, little things can become your big moment.

little smile

big night



Otezla is different. It's a pill—not an injection, biologic, or cream.

- For **plaque psoriasis**, **75% clearer skin** is achievable after just 4 months
- Otezla is also proven to **help with moderate to severe scalp psoriasis**
- The Otezla Prescribing Information has **no requirement for initial or routine blood testing**
- Otezla can be **prescribed in the doctor's office or from home with telehealth**

\$0 co-pay*
program
otezla.com/copay

APPROVED USE

Otezla® (apremilast) is a prescription medicine approved for the treatment of adult patients with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis for whom phototherapy or systemic therapy is appropriate.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Do not take Otezla if you are allergic to apremilast or to any of the ingredients in Otezla.

Otezla can cause severe diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting, especially within the first few weeks of treatment. Use in elderly patients and the use of certain medications with Otezla appears to increase the risk of having diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting. Tell your doctor if any of these conditions occur.

Otezla is associated with an increase in depression. In clinical studies, some patients reported depression and suicidal behavior while taking Otezla. Some patients stopped taking Otezla due to depression. Before starting Otezla, tell your doctor if you have had feelings of depression or suicidal thoughts or behavior. Be sure to tell your doctor if any of these symptoms or other mood changes develop or worsen during treatment with Otezla.

Some patients taking Otezla lost body weight. Your doctor should monitor your weight regularly. If unexplained or significant weight loss occurs, your doctor will decide if you should continue taking Otezla.

Some medicines may make Otezla less effective, and should not be taken with Otezla. Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines.

Side effects of Otezla include diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, upper respiratory tract infection, tension headache, and headache. These are not all the possible side effects with Otezla. Ask your doctor about other potential side effects. Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or planning to breastfeed. Otezla has not been studied in pregnant women or in women who are breastfeeding.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-332-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information on the next page.

*Certain restrictions apply; eligibility not based on income.

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10/20 US-OTZ-20-1260

 **Otezla**®
(apremilast) 30mg tablets

show *more* of you

To see before and after results, please scan the QR code.



Pay \$0 for Otezla



The \$0 co-pay* program

Most people with private insurance **pay nothing out of pocket** for their prescription.

After you're prescribed, you have the same opportunity to save.

How to get the \$0 co-pay offer:

1. Go to [otezla.com/copay](https://www.otezla.com/copay)
2. Call **1-844-4OTEZLA** (1-844-468-3952)
3. Ask your doctor about the \$0 co-pay card

We've got you covered

If you have private insurance and are experiencing delays or your private insurance doesn't cover Otezla, you may be eligible for **free medication** through the **Otezla Bridge Program**.†

If you have government-issued insurance (Medicare or Medicaid) or are uninsured/underinsured, you may be eligible for the **Patient Assistance Program**.

If you have lost prescription coverage during this pandemic, please contact **Otezla SupportPlus™**. They will work with you to find the right resources to help you with your treatment.

For all Otezla savings questions:
call **1-844-4OTEZLA** (1-844-468-3952)



*Certain restrictions apply; eligibility not based on income, must be 18 years or older. This offer is not valid for persons eligible for reimbursement of this product, in whole or in part under Medicaid, Medicare, or similar state or federal programs. Offer not valid for cash-paying patients. People who are not eligible can call 1-844-4OTEZLA to discuss other financial assistance opportunities.

†To receive a free bridge supply of Otezla, you must have an on-label diagnosis and be denied or experiencing a delay in obtaining coverage. Federal, State, or similar insurance plans are not eligible for Bridge. Once Otezla is approved by your commercial insurance plan, you will no longer be eligible for the Bridge Program.

Brief Summary of Prescribing Information OTEZLA® (oh-TEZ-lah) (apremilast) Tablets

Rx Only

This information does not take the place of talking to your doctor about your medical condition or treatment. If you have any questions about OTEZLA® (apremilast), ask your doctor. Only your doctor can determine if OTEZLA is right for you.

What is the most important information I should know about OTEZLA?

OTEZLA may cause serious side effects:

Diarrhea, Nausea, and Vomiting have been reported in some patients taking OTEZLA and in some cases, patients required hospitalization. Most events happened within the first few weeks of starting OTEZLA and occurred more in patients taking medications to reduce blood pressure or in those patients 65 years of age or older. Tell your doctor if any of these occur.

Depression was reported by some patients taking OTEZLA. Before taking OTEZLA, tell your doctor if you have had feelings of depression, suicidal thoughts, or suicidal behavior. You, your caregivers, and family members should be alert for the development or worsening of depression, suicidal thoughts, or other mood changes. If such changes occur, contact your doctor. Your doctor will determine whether you should continue taking OTEZLA.

Weight loss occurred in some patients taking OTEZLA. Your doctor should monitor your weight regularly. If unexplained or significant weight loss occurs, your doctor will consider whether you should continue taking OTEZLA.

Some medicines should not be taken with OTEZLA as they may make OTEZLA less effective. Tell your doctor about all the medications you take, including prescription and nonprescription medications.

What is OTEZLA?

OTEZLA is a prescription medicine used for the treatment of adult patients with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis for whom phototherapy or systemic therapy is appropriate.

It is not known if OTEZLA is safe and effective in children less than 18 years of age.

Who should not take OTEZLA?

You must not take OTEZLA if you are allergic to apremilast or to any of the ingredients in OTEZLA.

What should I tell my doctor before taking OTEZLA?

Tell your doctor if you:

- have had feelings of depression, suicidal thoughts, or suicidal behavior
- have any kidney problems
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if OTEZLA can harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if OTEZLA passes into your breast milk.

What are the side effects of OTEZLA?

- OTEZLA may cause serious side effects. See **“What is the most important information I should know about OTEZLA?”**
- **Common side effects** of OTEZLA are:
 - diarrhea
 - nausea
 - headache
 - vomiting
 - upper respiratory tract infection
 - tension headache

These are not all the possible side effects with OTEZLA. Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

General Information about OTEZLA

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in their package inserts. This is a Brief Summary of important information about OTEZLA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more complete product information, or visit [otezla.com](https://www.otezla.com), or call 1-844-4OTEZLA (1-844-468-3952).

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US-OTZ-20-1349

[PAINT PAIRS]

WHAT BROWN CAN DO



COOLED DOWN

The yellow undertone of the tan looks great with teal blue, yellow's opposite on the color wheel. **TOP** Peanut Shell 2162-40 **BOTTOM** Aegean Teal 2136-40 (Benjamin Moore)



WARMED UP

Lean into brown's copper side by pairing it with an orange of equal intensity. **TOP** Copper Harbor SW 6634 **BOTTOM** Double Latte SW 9108 (Sherwin-Williams)



PERFECTLY BALANCED

This sandy beige has red undertones that bring out the richness of chocolate brown. **TOP** Neutral Territory **BOTTOM** Coffee Date (Clare)



SUZANNE & LAUREN MCGRATH

Texture is everything. "If you're going to use one color and you don't have different textures, the room can feel flat," Lauren says. "That's why we wrapped the walls in fabric, put a jute rug on the floor for another texture, and painted the millwork slightly glossy in Benjamin Moore Clinton Brown."



NICOLE GIBBONS

Wall color is not a stand-alone decision. You have to think about the furniture in the room, Gibbons says. The blue armchair, artwork, and sofa guided her to pale beige walls for this living room. "Normally I would pair beige walls with warm decor, but this is such a light neutral, it works with the blues." ■



deciding which brown is right for your walls depends largely on how you want the room to feel. "Do you want it to feel open and airy? Then go lighter," says Nicole Gibbons, a designer and the founder of Clare paint company. "Do you want it to feel cozy and moody? Go darker." Either way, plan on decorating with multiple browns of the same temperature but different tones. In this sitting room, *left*, designed by mother-daughter duo McGrath II, warm browns appear not only on walls but also on the floor, rug, furniture, and built-ins. "It's a great way to make a room feel soothing," says Suzanne McGrath. Echoing the power of layering, Gibbons says, "Choosing variations of a hue will make your palette look more thoughtful. It almost doesn't matter where you put them in the room."

“If the walls are glossy, choose a rug that’s rugged. If they’re matte, go with a more elegant rug.”

LAUREN MCGRATH, designer



"My bedroom is boring, boring, boring. No color, no style, no organization. How can I make it a space to escape, rest, and unwind?" **KIMBERLY PILKINGTON, Muncie, IN**

Add blackout liners to existing curtains. They'll block light and help insulate without sacrificing style.



We received so many questions from readers about how to create a relaxing bedroom retreat, one that's warm, tranquil, comfy, or zen. Although there's no one-size-fits-all solution where style is involved, there are designer-approved strategies you can use to fashion a calm space that suits your personality and lulls you into a serene state of mind. For this bedroom, designer Mona Ross Berman shows off one design fundamental: a plush, warming rug beneath the bed. Read on for more rest-easy ideas.



LAYOUT BASICS Incorporating a few principles from the Chinese philosophy feng shui can help you build a harmonious base. Start with your bed: It should be in the "command position" with a wall or sturdy headboard behind it, space to get in on either side, and a view of the door (without facing it directly). Establish a sense of balance with symmetrical pairs of items like nightstands, lights, and pillow sets.

INTRODUCING THE **NEW** SLEEP NUMBER 360® SMART BED

The first bed in the world designed to help you fall asleep faster and proven to provide more restful sleep. Enjoy your own personal microclimate as it gently balances surface temperature to keep you both blissfully asleep.

Quality sleep can help boost your immunity, increase energy and improve recovery. Compared to average sleepers, Sleep Number® bed owners enjoy almost an hour more sleep per night.*



NEW Smart 3D fabric is up to 50% more breathable for a cooler sleep surface†



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[SMART STRATEGY]

NIGHT TABLE

Use your nightstand to create a routine that can help your brain switch to sleep mode. The must-haves:

■ A DRAWER

"Part of the bedtime routine is putting your devices in a drawer and saying goodbye for the night," designer Yokota says. Many nightstands now have built-in outlets or charger openings.

■ A LAMP

Swap in a **C by GE Tunable Smart Bulb**. You can program cool light to wake you up and warm, dim light to calm you down. \$13; walmart.com

■ A SMALL TRAY

For jewelry, glasses, etc.

■ AN ALARM

Your phone is in the drawer, remember? Any clock will do, but if you have trouble falling asleep or waking up, consider the **Hatch Restore**. You can build a bedtime/wake-up routine with timed meditation, light cues (including a sunrise), and a sound machine. \$130; hatch.co

■ A COASTER

For a water glass.

■ SPACE

For books.

SPACE PLANNING

1 TOO SMALL

"Small living means utilizing vertical space," says designer (and therapist) Anita Yokota. Her go-to solutions are installing good-looking, catchall wall hooks and freeing surfaces by hanging plants and lights from the ceiling.

Pick furniture that does double duty, like a headboard with shelves or underbed drawers. Nightstands can be an opportunity for extra storage: Choose pieces with height, like a bookshelf. Or if you're also working in the bedroom, designer Emilie Munroe says, "Swap in a petite desk on one side of the bed. It's chic and functional."

2 TOO BIG

Think in zones. "Figure out the bed first then how you want to experience the rest of the space," says designer Linda Hayslett. And don't limit yourself to seating areas. Create an office, workout corner, or crafts space. "It comes down to your goals and lifestyle. Design for that," Yokota says. Each zone should be an island with its own accessories like rugs and lights.

"Otherwise they'll feel like an afterthought," Munroe says.

3 WINDOWS

If the best spot for your bed is on a wall with windows, like designer Beth Barden's room, above, create "architecture" behind it with columns of curtains and a grounding headboard. The right one will make you feel protected yet let in natural light.

Bad breath can get REALLY BAD when wearing a mask.

STOP MASK BREATH



Mask odor is caused by bad breath germs in your mouth.

TheraBreath Oral Rinse is Dentist formulated to attack those germs and keep fighting them all day and all night.

Nothing works faster and lasts longer to prevent bad breath than **TheraBreath Oral Rinse**.

Use twice a day to keep your breath, and your mask, smelling great.

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* 24 Hours of Fresh Breath protection when used as directed twice a day.

CHOOSING COLOR

Let's narrow it down. Serene and spa-like or cozy and a little moody?



Layer on
textiles in a
variety
of textures.



Create
contrast with
fields of light
colors against
dark.



1 SERENE OASIS

Designer Lucy Penfield's bedroom, above, wears Benjamin Moore Simply White, known for its brilliance that's neither too warm nor cool. It's the blank slate she prefers for a bed stacked with layers of neutral textiles and bright colors she can change with the seasons. Yokota is also firmly on Team Pale Paint for its light- and mood-boosting properties. "Light reflects light," she says. "And I mean that physically and emotionally. Lately I've wanted the comfort of creamier whites, like Sherwin-Williams Snowbound. It's crisp yet warm without yellow undertones." Munroe and Hayslett opt for a little more color, choosing pastels, taupes, or warm grays. "They can make a space feel spa-like and meditative," Hayslett says.



SNOWBOUND SW 7004 Sherwin-Williams
Anita Yokota's pick



PINK BLISS 2093-70
Benjamin Moore
Emilie Munroe's pick



PALLADIAN BLUE HC-144
Benjamin Moore
Emilie Munroe's pick



BORROWED LIGHT
No. 235 Farrow & Ball
Linda Hayslett's pick

2 SNUG SANCTUARY

Consider going dark if you've got natural light pouring in or want to be enveloped by cozy, velvety richness. Dark paint is versatile. Depending on the rest of your decor, it can feel traditional or modern and playful—it mirrors the personality of what's happening around it. Wearing Farrow & Ball Inchyra Blue on the walls, the bedroom designed by Amie Corley, above, has preppy leanings thanks to the headboard's nailhead trim, but ikat bedding gives it a lively spark. "Chocolate browns, forest greens, and blues with hints of black are built for comfort," Hayslett says. And designer Sara Gilbane opts for deep mossy greens, which are comforting and flattering to most skin tones.



RAILINGS No. 31
Farrow & Ball
Linda Hayslett's pick



MAHOGANY No. 36
Farrow & Ball
Linda Hayslett's pick



STUDIO GREEN No. 93
Farrow & Ball
Sara Gilbane's pick



HALE NAVY HC-154
Benjamin Moore
Emilie Munroe's pick



THE
**SOOTHING,
HONEY-LICIOUS,**
NIGHTTIME,
SNIFFLING,
SNEEZING,
COUGHING,
ACHING,
STUFFY HEAD,
FEVER,
**BEST SLEEP
WITH A COLD,
MEDICINE.**

Gilbane likes wallpaper for bedrooms where you spend low-light hours.



GOING SOFT

1 PILLOW LAYOUT

Gilbane bases her pillow formulas on bed size. For a king, above, she layers king pillows behind standards, behind three square Euros, and a patterned lumbar pillow in front. For a queen, stack pairs of standards + standards + Euros + a lumbar. And for a twin: A

single king + standard + lumbar or Euro.

2 PILLOW FUNCTION

For actually sleeping, your dream pillow depends on your usual position: side (find a high, firm pillow), back (a little lower), or stomach (even lower). You want your head-neck alignment to be straight. Note filler materials and consider allergy issues and breathability (some foam pillows run hot).

3 OUR PICKS

■ SIDE SLEEPERS

The Z Shoulder Zoned Dough pillow has cooling foam and a shoulder notch that will earn this pillow's place on your bed. \$115; maloufsleep.com

■ **BACK** The Original from Coop is noted for its medium-firm density and adjustability. Remove foam for a lower height; add more if needed. (Pillows come with extra filler.) \$60; coophomegoods.com

■ **TUMMY** A thinner option, The Ultimate from Sleep Number's PlushComfort line has layers of inserts you can remove for less loft. \$80; sleepnumber.com

■ DOWN-LOVERS

The fluffable, punchable, zhooshable choice for those who like their temps even and cool. IKEA Gulkavle comes in high or low (\$60/\$50; ikea.com). Or pick a handmade Lite, Medium, or Firm from czechfeatherdownco.com (\$48).

MATTRESS BUYING GUIDE

MATTRESS TYPES

■ Innerspring

The traditional kind

What's inside Metal coils. Adding a pillow-top or foam topper makes it a hybrid.

Good for Back sleepers or those seeking more support.

To know If you share a bed, test if you can feel your partner moving.

■ Foam

The beds in a box

What's inside Layers of foam with varying densities. Overall firmness is rated 1-10.

To know These need a sturdy base like strong slats or a platform. Some people complain about heat retention, which varies by foam type.

■ Adjustable Air

The customizable ones

What's inside Layers of foam and inflatable air chamber(s).

To know Pricy, but endless options—for you and your partner.

BEFORE YOU BUY

Ask about a brand's **trial period**; many give you 100 days to decide. If you don't like it, what's the **return policy**? And if you love it, what's the **warranty**? Either way, have reviewers noted **customer service** issues? And how does **delivery** and **disposal** of your old mattress (or the new one if you hate it) work? ■

Curél



DERMATOLOGIST
TESTED

RELIEF YOU CAN TRUST



5 STAR REVIEW

**“MY WINTER SKIN
HAS FOUND GREAT RELIEF!!!**

I received Curél Ultra Healing Lotion
to try on my parched winter skin...
and boy was I happy!

Curél ingredients were mild, and
nourished my skin for hours.

There was no scent,
the application was not greasy.
I've been using this product daily.

Mariposa76, NJ
on curel.com

(Received an incentive for this review)



i did it!

A first-time homeowner gravitates toward affordable secondhand furniture for no-pressure facelifts.

Two **woven-back barstools** came from one tinkering session.



When it comes to DIY projects, Rachel Jensen isn't afraid to wing it. And she'll keep at it until she's happy. She tried three sets of kitchen barstools—all snagged secondhand from Facebook Marketplace, her favorite source for buying and selling furniture—before finding this pair for her family's Ann Arbor, MI, home. "I wanted a boho kind of vibe," she says. So she figured out how to replace the slatted backs with jute cord woven across the open frame.

Turn the page to see her technique.

Show us what you made

Send photos of you with your latest project to IDidIt@meredith.com and post on Instagram with our #BHGIDidIt hashtag.

Peace by piece.



For the win win

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WHAT SHE DID

Rachel transformed a \$35 pair of barstools in about 12 hours with power tools, paint, and jute cord. "They turned out even better than I thought they would," she says.



MEET RACHEL

Furniture makeovers fill her stories on Instagram (@practicallyrach).

BEST WAY TO SPEND \$50

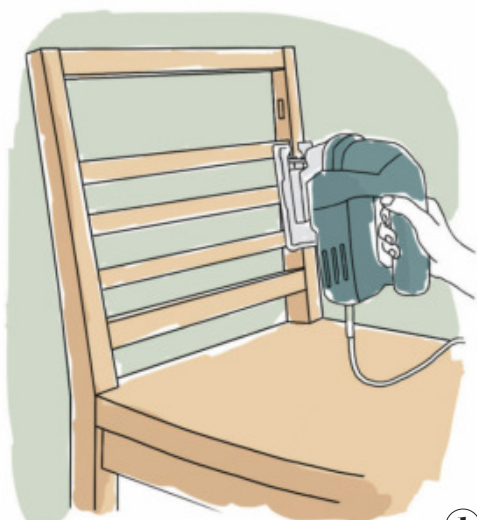
"Find a piece and negotiate the lowest price possible, then use the rest of the money for paint and other supplies needed to upcycle."

REMEDY FOR A CREATIVE RUT

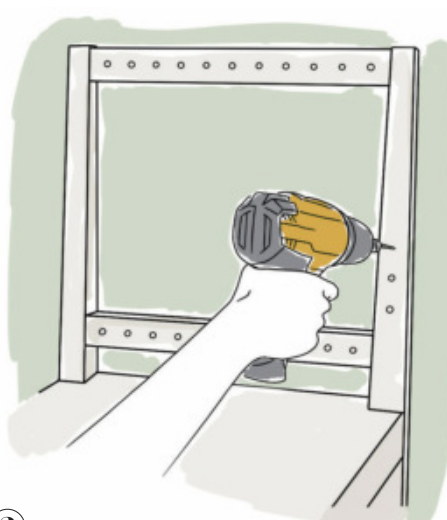
"Sometimes it takes starting over with a new idea to get back into a groove."

CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT

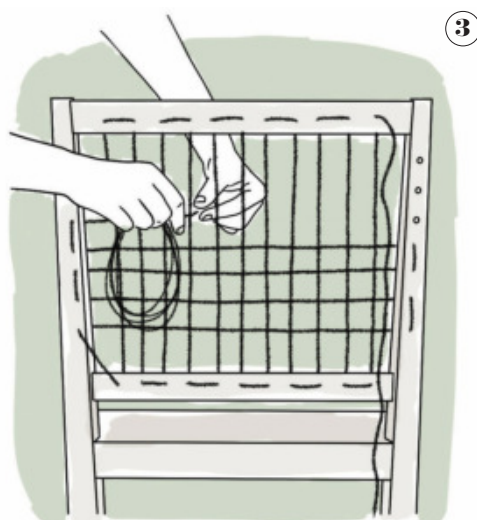
"Spray paint." ■



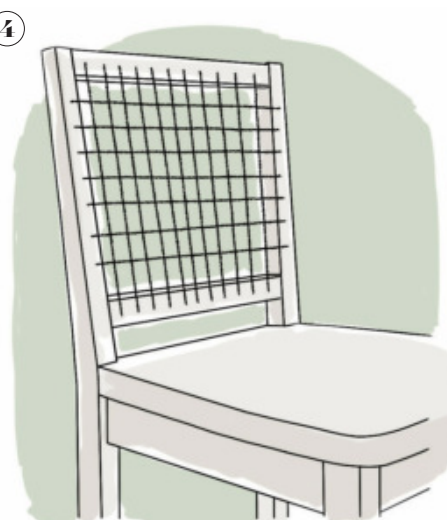
1



2



3



4

SUPPLIES

- Jigsaw
- Wood filler
- Electric sander and sandpaper
- Primer and paint
- Clear topcoat spray
- Drill, 1/8-inch bit
- 4-ply 72-pound jute cord (a 1-pound skein was enough for both of Rachel's stools)
- Clear superglue

1 MODIFY

For a sleeker profile, Rachel cut off some of the flared section along the top of the stool backs using a jigsaw. She cut and removed the back slats, filled the holes with wood filler, then sanded, painted, and sealed the frames.

2 DRILL

Rachel drilled evenly spaced holes around the back

frame (11 along the top and bottom, seven on each side) to weave the cord through.

3 WEAVE

Wrapping the cord end in tape to make it easier to feed through the holes, Rachel started at the upper-right corner, stringing the back vertically. At the last bottom hole, she moved diagonally to the side bottom hole and began stringing

horizontally, weaving through the vertical cords. She pulled the cord through the last hole to end.

4 FINISH

Rachel put superglue into the starting hole, the last hole, and the holes where the cord diagonally crosses the corner of the frame. She cut off the diagonal section once the glue dried.



INSPIRED TO DIY?

Winter issue on sale now at newsstands and magazine.store/DIY. Hover your smartphone camera here to purchase.



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the art of the still life

Ceramist **Frances Palmer** approaches photography in the same manner as her pottery: Embrace simple beauty and imperfection.



Frances uses spring clamps to hang painted canvases and fabric on a metal bar supported by two tripods. "I usually crop out the equipment, but sometimes I leave it in to give context to the image."

best known for her playful ceramics, Frances Palmer pulls back the curtain on her creative process—including photo tips—in her new book, *Life in the Studio*. Frances explains the parallel between throwing pottery and taking pictures: "It's a way of expressing your view of things. What I make inevitably comes out looking like me." There's an overriding principle at play too: appreciation of beauty in all its forms, from the organic shape of a shiny vase and vibrant colors of fresh-picked dahlias to spent blooms, freckled leaves, and containers veined with cracks. "There's something liberating about a broken vessel in this age of picture-perfect Instagram."



PORTRAIT: JANE BEILES

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PHOTO TIPS

Frances shares her tips for creating dramatic still lifes—whether you're shooting flowers, pottery, or an in-progress recipe on Instagram.

1

NATURAL LIGHT

Frances sets up her camera next to windows to get the best natural light.

Early-morning and late-afternoon sun (like the light hitting the spider mums, *right*) casts the most dramatic shadows.

2

CONTRAST & MOOD

Changing the background color, *below*, establishes different moods. Spring flowers against a neutral feel dreamy and peaceful. Against a black velvet backdrop, the flowers appear brighter and more defined, like a classic Dutch still life.



“Everybody has something to say. It's not about comparing yourself to other people.”

FRANCES PALMER



MORE FROM FRANCES

In addition to photography tips, Frances shares insights on pottery, entrepreneurship, gardening, and cooking in her new book, *Life in the Studio: Inspiration and Lessons on Creativity*. \$35; workman.com

3

PHOTO PRACTICES

Frances uses a Nikon F3 SLR camera and avoids tweaking images after taking them. "I hold the camera with enough distance to allow for cropping later on. I'm happiest with a 4×5-inch crop." ■



Q "What preventive things can I do to keep my home running smoothly?"

PEGGY DOTY,
Northwood, OH

it's a dirty job...

But you've got to do it. Deep cleaning a few of the hidden, hardworking parts of your house can get really yucky. Hang in there; your grit will pay off. Tackling these tasks regularly will help keep your home humming.



1 refrigerator coils

Dusty condenser coils make your fridge work harder, making it less energy efficient and shortening its life span. (There goes your ice cream budget.)

WHEN TO CLEAN
Twice a year; more often if you have pets.

WHAT TO DO
Find the coils. They're usually covered by a panel at the bottom front or on the back of a freestanding fridge and at the top of a built-in model. Unplug the fridge or turn off the power. If it's not built-in, pull it away from the back wall. (Transferring food to a cooler lightens the load and gives you

the chance to clean and organize inside.)

Take off the protective panel, put on a dust mask, and gently scrape across and between coils with a long-handled refrigerator brush. Follow up using the crevice tool



Appliance Brush Set, \$10; home depot.com

attachment on your vacuum. And because you're already up to your elbows in dust bunnies, clean the floor behind the fridge.

GOOD TO KNOW
Some refrigerators require special DIY cleaning techniques; others should be cleaned by a professional. Refer to the owner's manual.

2 dishwasher filter

If your dishwasher has a manual-clean filter and you don't take care of it, at some point you'll notice an odor or food specks on your clean dishes.

WHEN TO CLEAN
Once a month.

WHAT TO DO
Look under the bottom rack for the filter. (Some have two removable parts: a cylinder and a flat mesh screen. Check your owner's manual for specifics.) Twist to remove it, then scrub it under hot water using an old toothbrush. For greasy grime, hand-wash with dish soap.

3 dryer duct

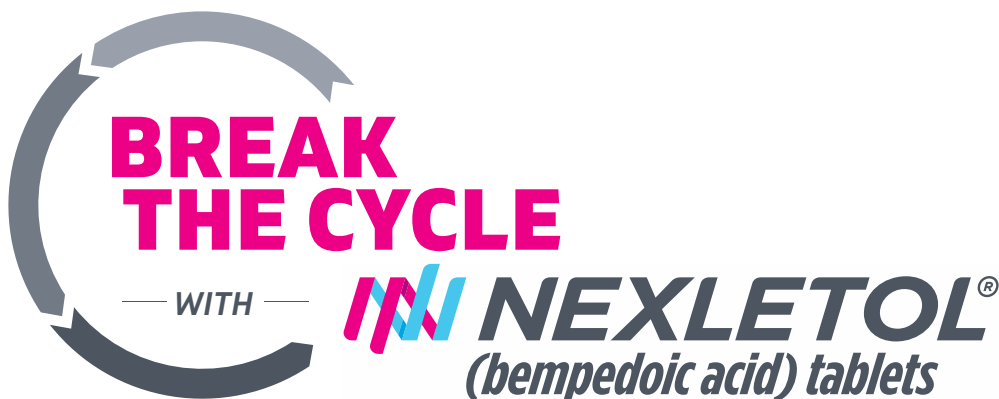
Thumbs up if you clean the lint trap before drying every load of laundry. You should also deal with lint buildup in the dryer duct; it's an energy suck and a fire hazard.

WHEN TO CLEAN
At least once a year.

WHAT TO DO
Pull the dryer away from the wall and unplug it. (If it's a gas model, shut off the gas.) Disconnect the duct from the dryer and the wall, then loosen the lint inside with a long-handled brush or drill-powered cleaning kit designed for dryer ducts. Using a vacuum with a crevice tool attachment, suck up the lint on the floor and from the holes in the dryer and the wall. Brush and vacuum the vent outdoors too.

GOOD TO KNOW
Cut down on future fuzz by installing a rigid metal duct, which won't trap lint the way flexible ducts can, and routing the duct directly from the dryer to outside.

LOWERING BAD CHOLESTEROL can be a never-ending cycle.



Stuck in a cycle of diet, exercise, and a statin without the results you need? Ask your doctor about adding **nonstatin NEXLETOL—just 1 pill, once a day—** if you have known heart disease or an inherited condition that causes high levels of bad cholesterol. Pay as little as \$10 for up to a 3-month supply with our Co-Pay Card.*

**ADDING NEXLETOL LOWERED
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†Results vs placebo (a sugar pill) at Week 12 in a clinical trial of patients with an inherited condition that causes high levels of bad cholesterol and/or known heart disease. Individual results may vary.

Visit NEXLETOL.com to learn more

What is NEXLETOL?

NEXLETOL is a prescription medicine used, along with diet and other lipid-lowering medicines, in the treatment of adults who need additional lowering of “bad” cholesterol (LDL-C) and have:

- heterozygous familial hypercholesterolemia (HeFH), an inherited condition that causes high levels of LDL-C, and/or
- known cardiovascular disease

It is not known if NEXLETOL can decrease problems related to high cholesterol, such as heart attacks or stroke.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What should I tell my doctor before taking NEXLETOL?

Tell your doctor if you:

- have, or have ever had, gout
- have, or have ever had, tendon problems
- are pregnant or breastfeeding, or may become pregnant or plan to breastfeed
- have severe kidney or liver problems
- are taking simvastatin or pravastatin

What is the most important safety information I should know about NEXLETOL?

NEXLETOL can cause side effects that can become serious, including:

- high levels of uric acid in the blood, which can lead to gout, a painful joint condition. Call your doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:
 - severe foot pain, especially in the toe joint
 - warm joints
 - swelling
 - tender joints
 - joint redness
- tendon problems: Stop taking NEXLETOL immediately and get medical help right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms of tendon rupture:
 - hear or feel a snap or pop in a tendon area

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (cont.)

- bruising right after an injury in a tendon area
- unable to move the affected area or put weight on the affected area

What are the common side effects of NEXLETOL?

Tell your doctor right away about any side effect you experience. NEXLETOL can cause side effects, including:

- symptoms of the common cold or flu
- muscle spasms
- back pain
- pain in the legs or arms
- stomach pain

Your doctor may check your blood for side effects that you might not be able to feel.

These are not all the possible side effects of NEXLETOL. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

What form does NEXLETOL come in?

NEXLETOL is a tablet that you take by mouth. It contains 180 mg of bempedoic acid.

Can I take NEXLETOL with other medicines?

For lowering cholesterol, NEXLETOL is often taken with other medicines, including a group of medicines called statins. For two statins, simvastatin and pravastatin, your doctor may change the dose if you also take NEXLETOL. Before taking NEXLETOL, tell your doctor if you take any of the following medicines:

- simvastatin
- pravastatin

The risk information provided here is not comprehensive. To learn more, talk about NEXLETOL with your doctor or pharmacist. The FDA-approved product labelling can be found at NEXLETOL.com or 1-833-377-7633.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088, or at www.fda.gov/medwatch. You may also report side effects to ESPERION at 1-833-377-7633.

NEXLETOL is available by prescription only.

Please see Summary of Information about NEXLETOL on the next page.

ESPERION

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*For privately or commercially insured patients. Restrictions apply.

Summary of Information about NEXLETOL™ (bempedoic acid) tablets, for oral use

The risk information provided here is not comprehensive. To learn more, talk about NEXLETOL with your healthcare provider or pharmacist. The FDA-approved product labelling can be found at NEXLETOL.com or 1-833-377-7633.

What is NEXLETOL used for?

NEXLETOL is a prescription medicine used along with diet and other lipid-lowering medicines in the treatment of adults with:

- heterozygous familial hypercholesterolemia (HeFH). HeFH is an inherited condition that causes high levels of “bad” cholesterol called low density lipoprotein (LDL).
- known heart disease who need additional lowering of “bad” cholesterol (LDL-C) levels.

It is not known if NEXLETOL can decrease problems from high cholesterol, such as heart attacks, stroke, death, or other heart problems.

It is not known if NEXLETOL is safe and effective in people with severe kidney problems including people with end-stage kidney disease who are on dialysis.

It is not known if NEXLETOL is safe and effective in people with severe liver problems.

It is not known if NEXLETOL is safe and effective in children under 18 years of age.

What should I tell my healthcare provider?

Before you start taking NEXLETOL, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have or had gout.
- have or had tendon problems.
- are pregnant. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant while taking NEXLETOL. You and your healthcare provider will decide if you should take NEXLETOL while you are pregnant.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if NEXLETOL passes into your breast milk. You and your healthcare provider should decide if you will take NEXLETOL or breastfeed. You should not do both.
- have severe kidney problems.
- have severe liver problems.

What medications might interact with NEXLETOL?

NEXLETOL may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how NEXLETOL works. **Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.**

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take or plan to take simvastatin or pravastatin (other cholesterol lowering medicines). Taking simvastatin or pravastatin with NEXLETOL may increase your risk of developing muscle pain or weakness (myopathy).

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

What should I do if I take too much NEXLETOL?

If you take too much NEXLETOL, call your poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

What are possible side effects of NEXLETOL?

NEXLETOL may cause serious side effects, including:

- **increased levels of uric acid in your blood (hyperuricemia).** This can happen within 4 weeks of you starting NEXLETOL and continue throughout your treatment. Your healthcare provider may monitor your blood uric acid levels while you are taking NEXLETOL. High levels of blood uric acid may lead to gout. Call your healthcare provider if you have the following symptoms of hyperuricemia and gout:
 - severe foot pain especially in the toe joint
 - tender joints
 - warm joints

- joint redness
- swelling

Gout may happen more in people who have had gout before but also can happen in people who have never had it before.

- **tendon rupture or injury. Tendon problems can happen in people who take NEXLETOL.** Tendons are tough cords of tissue that connect muscles to bones. Symptoms of tendon problems may include pain, swelling, tears, and inflammation of tendons including the arm, shoulder, and back of the ankle (Achilles).

- **Tendon rupture can happen while you are taking NEXLETOL.**

Tendon ruptures can happen within weeks or months of starting NEXLETOL.

- **The risk of getting tendon problems while you take NEXLETOL is higher if you:**

- are over 60 years of age
- are taking steroids (corticosteroids)
- are taking antibiotics (fluoroquinolones)
- have renal failure
- have had tendon problems

- **Stop taking NEXLETOL immediately and get medical help right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms of a tendon rupture:**

- hear or feel a snap or pop in a tendon area
- bruising right after an injury in a tendon area
- unable to move the affected area or put weight on the affected area

Stop taking NEXLETOL until tendon rupture has been ruled out by your healthcare provider. Avoid exercise and using the affected area. The most common areas of pain and swelling are the rotator cuff (the shoulder), the biceps tendon (upper arm), and Achilles tendon at the back of the ankle. This can happen with other tendons.

- **Talk to your healthcare provider about the risk of tendon rupture with continued use of NEXLETOL.** You may need a different lipid-lowering medicine to treat your cholesterol levels.

The most common side effects of NEXLETOL include:

- symptoms of the common cold, flu, or flu-like symptoms
- muscle spasms
- back pain
- pain in shoulder, legs, or arms
- stomach pain
- anemia
- increased liver enzymes
- bronchitis

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all the possible side effects of NEXLETOL.

For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

What is some general information about the safe and effective use of NEXLETOL?

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. **Do not** use NEXLETOL for a condition for which it was not prescribed. **Do not** give NEXLETOL to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them. You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for information about NEXLETOL that is written for healthcare professionals.

Based on Patient Information. Revised: 02/2020

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07/20 US-NXTL-2000339

4

washer filter

Does your washing machine have a lint filter or a drain pump filter? You'll find the answer in—you guessed it—the owner's manual. (If the filter is self-cleaning, you're off the hook for this task.)

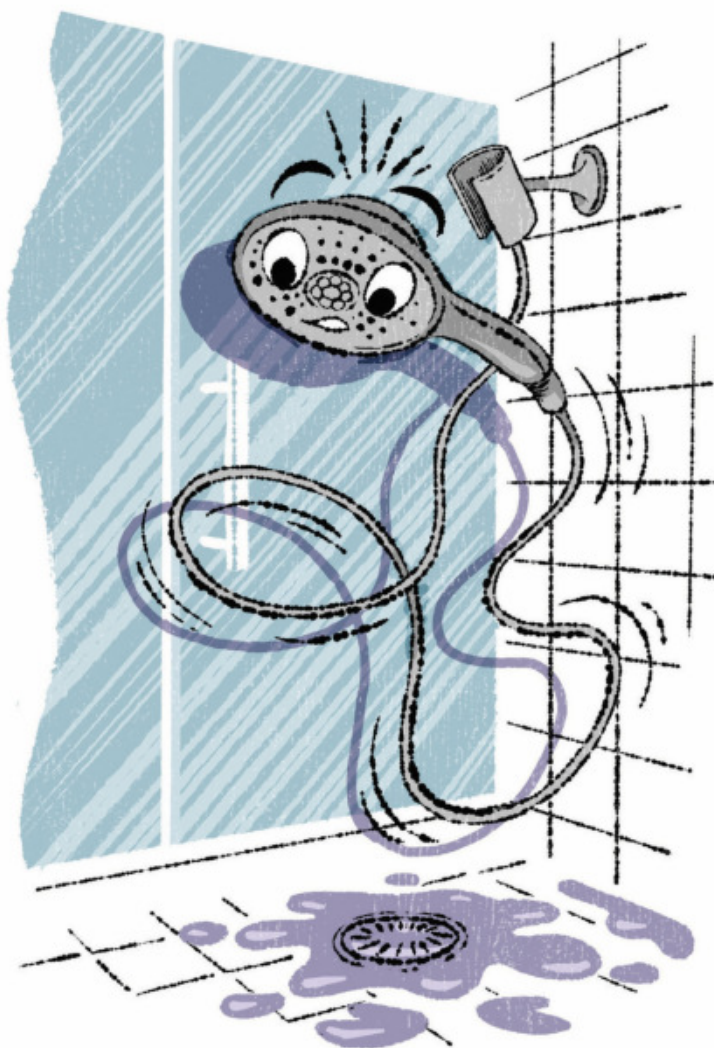
WHEN TO CLEAN

Once a month.

WHAT TO DO

On a top-loading machine, the lint filter will likely be inside the drum or on the back. Most lint filters can be removed and rinsed under hot water.

A front-loader's drain pump filter and hose are typically on the front. (Look for a little door.) Put a towel under a shallow pan on the floor, then remove the hose plug and let the water flow into the pan. If you haven't done this for a while (or ever), expect as much as a quart of smelly water along with some crud. Then slowly unscrew the drain pump filter (water might flow or dribble out) and pull it out. You'll probably find some slimy stuff; you might find loose items from pockets. Dump out the filter and wash it with water and a toothbrush.



5

shower drain

You probably don't think about cleaning your shower drain until you realize you're standing in water after every shower.

WHEN TO CLEAN
Before the water is ankle deep.

WHAT TO DO

You'll need a screwdriver, flashlight,

wire hanger, and disposable plastic bag; you'll want rubber gloves. Turn on the bathroom ventilation fan; it could get stinky. Remove the drain cover. Pull out the hair and gunk

you can reach with your gloved fingers. Bend the wire hanger into a pole with a hook on the end, then fish around to see if you can snag anything else. Before putting the drain

cover back on, you might want to install a special strainer, such as the one at *left* that catches hair and gunk. No more fishing.

GOOD TO KNOW

If your only problem is standing water, a hair clog is the most likely cause. If you notice an odor that won't go away or you're having the same problems with other drains, you could be facing a bigger issue. Probably best to contact a plumber.



Shower Shroom, \$13; tubshroom.com

BONUS POINTS FOR clean gutters

Clearing out gutters is a spring and fall job, but if you can't remember the last time you did it and you don't mind being on a ladder this time of year, do it now. Clogs can cause ice dams that damage your gutters and roof. Worse, when ice melts and doesn't drain, it finds a way indoors. (Hello, wet ceilings.)

SCOOP FIRST

Put on work gloves and set up a ladder. Scoop out the leaves, twigs, and other junk with your hands and a trowel. Drop them in a bucket attached to the ladder or onto a drop cloth on the ground below.

THEN SPRAY

Check for downspout clogs. Starting at the end farthest from the downspout, flush the gutter using a hose with a sprayer. If the water doesn't rush out below, spray up the downspout or remove the downspout and flush it out. ■



ON A ROLL?
See the 11 little household things you're forgetting to clean. Hover your smartphone camera here.

diary of a first-time gardener

With big garden dreams but almost no experience, a homeowner learns by doing as she transforms her Southern California front yard.



↑
We cleaned out the yard for a blank slate. But keeping the mature lemon tree was a must.

→
The goal was to install plants in a way that complemented the home design and framed a welcoming entryway.

Five years ago, my husband, Ross, and I bought our first home, a Craftsman-style bungalow in San Diego. The 1915 house was charming but needed work inside and out. As a home blogger who loves old houses, I had a pretty good sense of what I wanted to do with the interior. But as a novice gardener on a budget, redoing the front yard—filled with concrete scraps, overgrown weeds, and neglected plants—would be stepping into the unknown. I did have a sense of my starting point, however: Being in the middle of drought-plagued Southern California, I wanted a beautiful, sustainable garden that could survive on little water and would benefit our environment. With those goals in mind, I forged ahead, determined to learn everything I could about plants and to give my front yard a makeover within a year.

→
Ashley Goldman, who writes about design on her blog (thegoldhive.com), with Ross and their cat, Mabel.



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“I learned that gardening is more than putting plants in the ground; it’s about creating an ecosystem.”



Once the plants matured, we installed lighting to accent them as well as the pathway.

[DESIGN TIME LINE]

HOW I DID IT

My initial design inspiration came from the garden at a local art museum. Filled with native plants but still lush, that garden showed me that low-water plants aren’t all dry and desertlike. That’s the vision I kept in mind as I designed our front yard.

JANUARY 2016

Understanding the big picture

I took my first class on low-water landscaping (hosted for free by the city), one of many courses I wound up taking that year. It helped me build my list of plants that would thrive here and taught me to think about things like the grade of my slope.

APRIL 2016

Out with the old

I figured out which plants in our existing yard would go (bye, giant birds-of-paradise) and posted them online with an invitation

for people to take for free whatever they could dig out themselves.

MAY 2016

Doing the groundwork

Before planting, I prepped: I had a plumber check the health of our front yard sewer line, applied for a permit to plant a tree in the parkway, and hired a crew to grade the slope for a smooth surface and good drainage.

JUNE 2016

Making plans (and changing them)

I drafted garden plans, first freehand and then digitally. The biggest

eye-opener was doing a Photoshop rendering with images I’d found online of my favorite plants. With the plants in the landscape at their mature sizes, my yard looked like it was on steroids. I knew I needed to scale way back.

JULY 2016

Reality check

After months of researching irrigation options and pricing out plants at nurseries, I realized I was spinning my wheels. I hired a landscape team to guide me through the last steps and handle the install.

NOVEMBER 2016

The big day

We decided to install the yard in fall—prime planting time in California, when temperatures are mild and winter rains are on the way. The crew wound up needing to jackhammer to make holes in our compacted and rocky soil, which we amended with gypsum. (To think, I’d planned on digging with my basic shovel.) We finished in time for the rainiest winter in recent memory. By early spring, we were already seeing flowers.



Important facts about FANAPT® (iloperidone) tablets

PURPOSE

Fanapt® is a prescription medication used for the treatment of schizophrenia in adults.

Deciding to look at alternate medications is something your health care provider may do. Your health care provider needs to consider that Fanapt® may change your heart rhythm (meaning there is more time between heartbeats). When taking other drugs that may cause this same change in heart rhythm, you are at a higher risk of a serious, even life-threatening medical issue (torsade de pointes), which may result in sudden death. In many cases, your health care provider may prescribe another medication like Fanapt® first.

Fanapt® needs to be taken as directed starting at a low dose and slowly increasing the strength. This may delay the control of symptoms in the first 1 to 2 weeks of treatment.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION BOXED WARNING:

Elderly patients with psychosis related to dementia (having lost touch with reality due to memory loss and experiencing a decline in day-to-day functioning) who are treated with antipsychotic medications are at an increased risk of death compared to patients treated with a placebo. Fanapt® is not approved for use in people with dementia-related psychosis.

Patients should not use Fanapt® if they have a known allergy to Fanapt® or its ingredients. Allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, rapid swelling of the skin (angioedema), and other symptoms of allergy (e.g., throat tightness; swelling of the throat, face, lips, mouth and tongue; hives; rash; and itching) have been reported.

An increased risk of stroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly people with dementia-related psychosis. Fanapt® is not approved for use in people with dementia-related psychosis.

Fanapt® may change your heart rhythm (meaning there is more time between heartbeats). Heart rhythm changes have occurred in patients taking Fanapt® and are a risk factor for serious, even life-threatening medical issues. You should tell your health care provider if you have or have had heart problems. Contact your health care provider right away if you feel faint or have unpleasant feelings of irregular or forceful heartbeats as any of these feelings could be a sign of a rare, but serious side effect that could be fatal. You should not use Fanapt® with other drugs that are known to cause these same heart rhythm issues.

Tell your health care provider if you have some or all of the following symptoms: very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating or increased

heart rate and blood pressure. These may be signs of a condition called neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS), a rare but serious side effect that could be fatal. This may happen with Fanapt® or drugs like it.

Abnormal or uncontrollable movements of the face, tongue, or other parts of the body may be signs of a serious condition called tardive dyskinesia (TD), which could become permanent. The chance of this condition going away decreases, depending on how long and how much medication has been taken. Tell your health care provider if you have body movements you can't control.

Fanapt® and medicines like it have been associated with metabolic changes (high blood sugar, high cholesterol and triglycerides, and weight gain) that can increase cardiovascular/cerebrovascular risks.

Tell your health care provider if you have diabetes or risk factors for diabetes (for example, obesity, family history of diabetes), or if you have unexpected increases in thirst, urination, or hunger. If so, your blood sugar should be monitored. Increases in blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia), which in some cases can be serious and associated with coma or death, have been reported in patients taking Fanapt® and medicines like it.

Changes in cholesterol and triglycerides have been seen in patients taking Fanapt® and medicines like it. Check with your health care provider while on treatment.

Some patients may gain weight while taking Fanapt®. Your health care provider should check your weight regularly.

Tell your health care provider about any medical conditions that you have including problems with your liver. Fanapt® is not recommended for patients with severe liver problems.

Tell your health care provider if you have a history of or have a condition that may increase your risk for seizures before you begin taking Fanapt®.

Light-headedness or faintness caused by a sudden change in heart rate and blood pressure when rising quickly from a sitting or lying position (orthostatic hypotension) has been reported with Fanapt®. This condition is most common when you start therapy, when restarting treatment, or when the dose of Fanapt® is increased. You should consult your health care provider if you have or have had heart problems or conditions that lead to these sudden changes since Fanapt® should be used with caution in these patients.

Fanapt® may increase the risk of falls, which could cause fractures or other injuries.

Decreases in infection-fighting white blood cells (WBCs) have been reported in some patients taking antipsychotic agents. Patients with a preexisting history of low WBC count or who have experienced a low WBC count due to drug therapy should

have their blood tested and monitored during the first few months of therapy. Some (including fatal) cases of agranulocytosis, a serious decrease in specific types of WBCs called neutrophils or granulocytes, have been reported in drugs like Fanapt®.

Fanapt® can increase the level of the hormone prolactin. Tell your health care provider if you experience breast enlargement, breast pain, or breast discharge, abnormal menstrual cycles in females or impotence in males. If elevated levels of prolactin persist, this may lead to bone loss.

Medicines like Fanapt® can impact your body's ability to reduce your body temperature. You should avoid overheating and dehydration.

Fanapt® and medicines like it have been associated with swallowing problems (dysphagia). If you have or have had swallowing problems, you should tell your health care provider.

As with many conditions that affect the way you think or feel, thoughts of suicide may occur. If you get these feelings, seek help immediately from your health care provider, or local emergency room.

For males, in the rare event you have a painful or prolonged erection (priapism), lasting 4 or more hours, stop using Fanapt® and seek immediate medical attention.

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*No performance comparison with leading detergent intended; products' performance differs.



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home/*gardens*

[GARDEN GOALS]

PLANT STRATEGIES

Going into the process, I had hundreds of plants on my list of favorites. By focusing on five priorities for my garden, I whittled my plant list down to a handful of finalists.



FOR THE BEES

Bees are so important for the world's ecosystem and its crops, yet they're in danger. I made sure to choose native plants or ones that would thrive here, like yarrow and guara, to help those pollinators out. I also never use pesticides in the garden.

FOR A SNACK

Although I sometimes wish we had planted a community vegetable garden in our front yard, I am happy we snuck in some subtle edible plants, such as rosemary, fig, and lavender, in our decorative garden. We

nosh on these (summer isn't complete without figs, Brie, and honey) and share them with our neighbors.

FOR SHADE

Trees, like a strawberry tree, cool our home and add height to the landscape. On a broader scale, they have the added benefit of reducing the urban heat island effect and providing necessary shelter for wildlife.

FOR COLOR

Cacti and succulents aren't the only low-water plants to choose from. I used flowers that are beautiful in the garden and in a bouquet.

FOR TEXTURE

I have a weakness for flowers, but I wanted to make sure there was something interesting to look at even when they weren't in bloom. I filled in with grasses for a range of texture year-round; some, such as pink muhly grass, bring color too. ■



**DESIGN YOUR
OWN GARDEN**

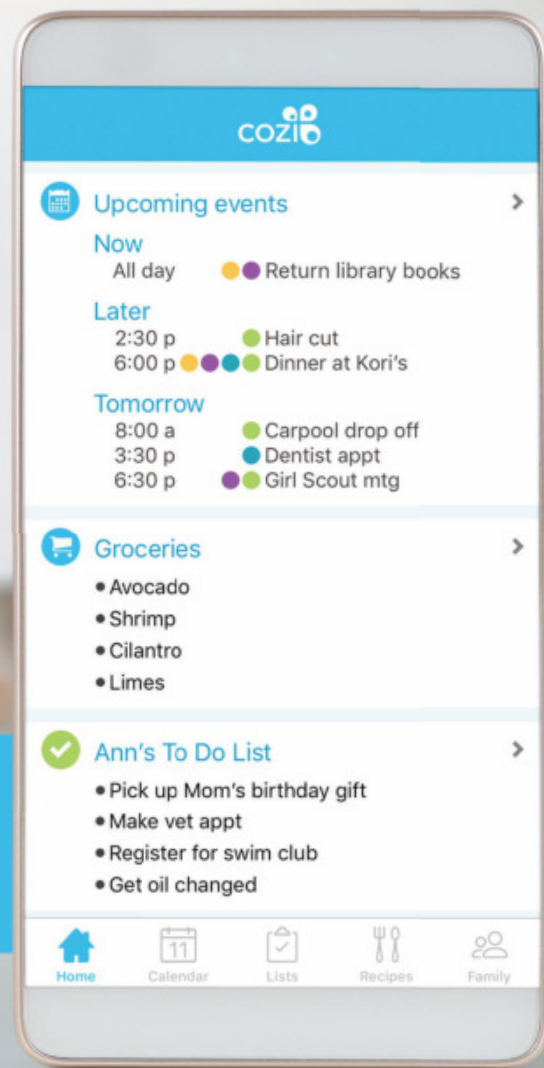
Simply hover
your smartphone
camera over
this smart code to
access BH&G's Plan-
A-Garden app.



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- ✓ Cozi will notify others and send reminders—so you don't have to
- ✓ Share the grocery list, chores and meal plan



Cozi is FREE in the app store!



Download on the
App Store



GET IT ON
Google Play



Rating in the App Store

CRISPY
SEASONED FISH
& CHIPS WITH
GREEN OLIVE
TARTAR SAUCE



Thyme and celery seeds flavor the crisped crumbs. Green olives and fresh dill update traditional tartar sauce.

A COOK'S GUIDE TO FISH

We asked you what ingredient you wanted to learn to cook, and fish bubbled to the top of the list. We're not surprised. It's healthy, quick to fix, and simple to flavor. Our Test Kitchen serves up its best buying tips, cooking tricks, and failproof recipes.

◀ Bake the Crispiest Fish Ever

We set out to create a better-for-you crunchy fillet that rivals the deep-fried version without all the fat. The keys to our faux-fry success? Using a pan rack for air circulation and a crisp-from-the-start coating. Try breading the fish in one of these:

CRUNCH FACTOR



PANKO

Skillet-toasting panko with a little oil keeps crumbs crisp through baking.



PANKO + NUTS

For extra crunch, stir chopped pecans or almonds into panko before skillet-toasting.



CRUSHED CROUTONS

Got croutons in the cupboard? Swap out the panko and use your pick of crushed flavored croutons.



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FISH PICKS

Learn how to choose the best quality fish and how to keep it that way.

1

FISH DETECTIVE

If you have access to a seafood market, ask staff what is fresh or previously frozen (you won't want to refreeze). Always look for moist fillets with firm flesh or whole fish with bright eyes and shiny, taut skin. Fresh fish, regardless of type, shouldn't have a strong "fishy" odor.

2

FARMED VS. WILD

Aquaculture (fish farms) is a growing industry intended to reduce the pressure on wild fish populations. Pros: more sustainable and lower prices. Cons: possible overcrowding in pens and lower omega-3 levels depending on the fish diet quality.

3

REEL BARGAIN

Fresh may not always be best. Frozen fish is a smart economical buy. Flash freezing fish at peak freshness ensures optimal flavor, texture, and nutritional content. Look for fish in vacuum-sealed packages. Avoid any with signs of damage or ice crystals. Thaw fish in original wrap in the fridge overnight or in a bowl of cold water.

4

SUPER CHILL

Store fish in the fridge on ice. Use within 48 hours.



Flash in the pan

Flounder Grenobloise—a French recipe for a brown butter-caper sauce with lemon—sounds fancy, but it's the quickest (20 minutes start to finish), most delicious way to cook delicate whitefish. And we think it's a good introduction for hesitant fish-eaters. The secrets to getting this relatively simple dish right are selecting fillets of uniform thickness, shaking off excess flour (you want a light dusting, not a crust), and cooking in a sturdy pan (such as a cast-iron skillet or a heavy-bottomed sauté pan).

RECIPES
BEGIN ON
PAGE 93.



BUTTER + OIL

A splash of oil protects the butter's milk solids so you can cook at a higher heat level without burning the butter.



KITCHEN TACKLE BOX

A flexible metal fish spatula is designed to gently transfer tender fish. Pin bone tweezers have the necessary bevel to ease pulling out the needlelike bones that may be left even after filleting. Mop fish with marinade or oil using a dishwasher-safe silicone brush that has long, flexible "bristles."



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smile today



Origami Fish Packets The technique of steaming fish in parchment is not novel, but this customizable recipe might become your new go-to one-dish meal. Fold up your choice of fish, veggies, hearty grains, and seasonings. As steam builds in the pouch, it gently cooks the fish while the seasonings infuse everything. Choose skinless, boneless fish fillets similar in thickness ($\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch) and size to keep cook times similar. Halibut, sole, tilapia, salmon, cod, or red snapper are good choices for this technique.



PARCHMENT PACKETS

Hover your smartphone camera over this code to watch how to fill and fold the pouches.



IS IT READY YET?
When the parchment puffs and begins to brown, your dinner is done. But you can also check by poking a quick-read thermometer through the packet into the fish.



*** HOW TO TEST DONENESS** When the flesh turns opaque, insert a fork and gently twist. It's done as soon as it begins to flake (at about 145°F to 155°F).

EARTH-FRIENDLY CATCH

The Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch program offers a free app plus a printable pocket-size Seafood Watch National Guide to help you choose the best fish (seafoodwatch.org). It includes fish that are well-managed and caught or farmed responsibly, such as:



ALBACORE TUNA
(POLE- AND LINE-CAUGHT)



ARCTIC CHAR
(FARMED)



BARRAMUNDI



BASS
(U.S. FARMED)



SALMON
(NEW ZEALAND)



TILAPIA
(U.S., CANADA, ECUADOR, PERU)



TROUT
(U.S. FARMED)

Q

“How can I prepare fish so it doesn’t have such a strong odor?”

PATTY FOXALL
Garfield Heights, OH

■ AROMATIC ISSUES

Managing the fishy smell starts with selection and cooking method. Strong-flavored fish (like salmon) have a higher fat content so emit more odor during cooking compared to mild fish, such as sole, cod, flounder, halibut, or tilapia. Frying and sautéing create the most smell; baking or steaming in parchment the least.

■ VENTILATION HELP

Turn on the exhaust fan or open windows before cooking.

■ SMELL-BUSTERS

Simmer a pan of

vinegar and water while cooking fish to offset the smell. After eating, immediately rinse plates, run the garbage disposal, and empty the trash.

■ FISHY HANDS

Try these options. Washing with lemon juice will take care of mild smells. For stubborn odors, make a paste of baking soda, toothpaste, and water. Rub it onto your hands and let it sit for a few minutes before rinsing. Alternately, wash hands under

cool water while rubbing them on a stainless-steel disk soap bar (or your stainless sink). Or look for a soap formulated to neutralize odors, such as Kirk’s Odor Neutralizing Hand Wash. ■

■ FREEZE RIGHT

Dry fish, then double-wrap in plastic wrap so there are no air pockets. Overwrap with freezer paper. (Or invest in a vacuum sealer.) Store up to 3 months.



January 2021 | BH&G 63

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QUICK CLUMPING
OUTSTANDING LIGHTNESS

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fast & fresh

EASY, DELICIOUS
RECIPES FOR A BETTER
DINNER TONIGHT



**LEAN GROUND
BEEF OR LAMB**
1 lb.



ONION
1 cup chopped



GARLIC
3 cloves, minced



**NO-SALT-ADDED
TOMATO SAUCE**
one 15-oz. can



FRESH OREGANO
1 Tbsp. chopped



**GROUND
CINNAMON**
¼ tsp.



ZITI PASTA
8 oz. dried



**PURCHASED
ALFREDO SAUCE**
1½ cups



HERBED SKILLET PASTITSIO

Traditionally, Greek pastitsio is a pasta-and-lamb casserole with spiced tomato sauce and béchamel sauce. Our stove top version relies on purchased Alfredo for ease and speed.

HANDS-ON TIME 15 min.
TOTAL TIME 40 min.

1. In a large ovenproof skillet cook beef, onion, and garlic on medium-high 8 to 10 minutes or until meat is browned. Drain off fat. Season with ¼ tsp. *kosher salt* and ¼ tsp. *ground black pepper*.
2. Stir in tomato sauce, 1¼ cups *water*, the oregano, and cinnamon. Bring to boiling.

Stir in ziti. Return to boiling. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, 20 minutes or until ziti is tender, stirring occasionally.

3. Preheat broiler. Once pasta is tender, spread Alfredo sauce evenly over top of mixture. Broil 4 to 5 inches from the heat 4 to 5 minutes or until sauce is bubbly and starts to brown, rotating skillet as needed for even browning. Top with additional oregano. Serves 4.

EACH SERVING 579 cal, 22 g fat (7 g sat fat), 99 mg chol, 905 mg sodium, 63 g carb, 6 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 33 g pro

↑↑
We used ziti, but small shells, rotini, or penne would work well too.



Using converted (parboiled) rice means this one-pan braise is done quickly.



CHICKEN THIGHS
1 lb., skinless, boneless



BUTTER
3 Tbsp.



CONVERTED RICE
1 cup, uncooked (such as Uncle Ben's)



CUMIN SEEDS
½ tsp.



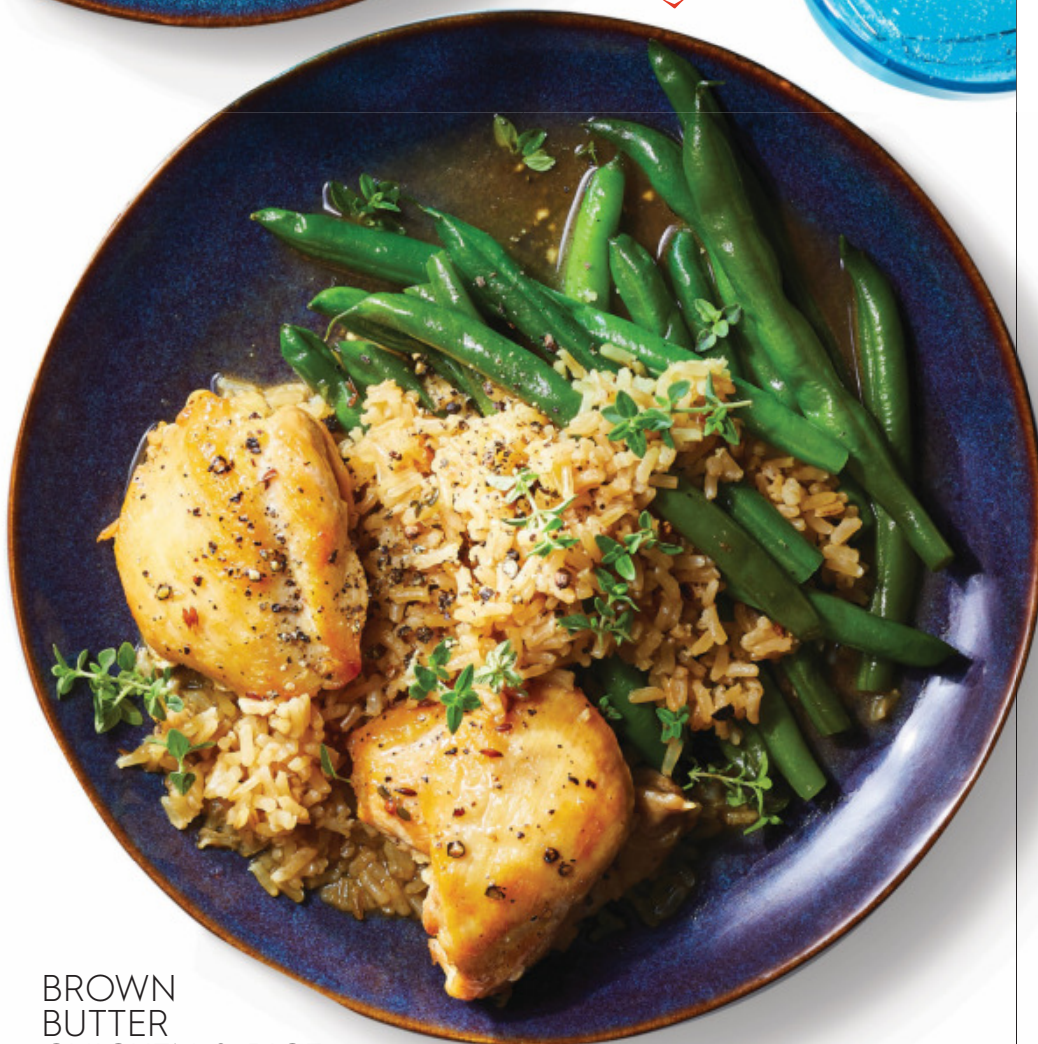
FRESH THYME
½ tsp. chopped



REDUCED-SODIUM CHICKEN STOCK
one 14.5-oz. can



GREEN BEANS
1 lb., trimmed



BROWN BUTTER CHICKEN & RICE

Browning butter is a practically effortless way to infuse a dish with savory, caramelized notes. Sizzling the rice in the brown butter toasts the rice for a bit of extra flavor.

HANDS-ON TIME 15 min.

TOTAL TIME 35 min.

1. In an extra-large skillet heat 1 Tbsp. olive oil over medium-high. Season chicken thighs with ½ tsp. kosher salt. Add to

skillet; brown 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to a plate, reserving juices in skillet; set chicken aside.

2. Add butter to the skillet. Swirl pan to melt butter. Cook 1 to 2 minutes. When it has a nutty aroma and is light brown, stir in rice, cumin seeds, and thyme; cook 1 minute. Stir in chicken stock, ¼ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. ground black pepper. Bring to boiling.

3. Return chicken to skillet. Arrange green beans around chicken. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, covered, 20 minutes or until chicken is done (175°F) and beans and rice are tender. If desired, top with additional thyme. Serves 4.

EACH SERVING 377 cal, 14 g fat (6 g sat fat), 63 mg chol, 556 mg sodium, 45 g carb, 3 g fiber, 3 g sugars, 17 g pro ■

"SHAKE
YOUR
"FLAVOR
MAKER,"



Get this recipe at hiddenvalley.com/mississippiroast
and scan for even more ways
to shake up weeknight dinners.



Data rates may apply



she's got skills



Ursula Carmona's four-year remodeling project has done much more than create a beautiful home for her family. It has expanded her DIY skills, self-confidence, and comfort zone—not to mention her tool collection.



FAMILY ROOM

Painting the walls and fireplace a neutral color meant Ursula Carmona could layer on her signature recipe of rich blues and greens in the furnishings and accents in the family room. A tall floor mirror at back helps amplify the natural light.



“How do I choose the right light fixture for a space?”

RAMONA DELROSE
Shorewood, IL

Ursula's advice: Look for fixtures with enough bulbs and power to light the room, then focus on scale. To visualize a potential fixture in the space, hang a paper cutout of the shape. A little big is always better than too small.



HOW TO CLEAN AN AREA RUG

Hover your smartphone camera here for our video how-to on removing stains and deep cleaning area rugs.

DINING ROOM

Taking out most of the wall between the kitchen and dining room (a cased opening remains) helped turn a junk storage spot into an eating area without major construction.

LIVING ROOM

When designing this space, Ursula says, “I asked myself, *What would encourage us to be closer as family?*”

The answer: game nights. So she built a board game table with shallow drawers to store puzzles.



“How do I camouflage my TV so it’s not the main focus of my living room?”

DONNA PINKERTON,
Sweetwater, TX

Ursula chose to paint her built-ins a satin black so the TV would blend in when off.

Her other suggestions:

Put a gallery wall around the TV, or conceal it behind sliding doors.

ENTRY

“I’m the daughter of an artist,” Ursula says, “so art is my weakness.” She turned a bare wall under the stairs into a gallery of landscape photos unified with golden frames.

When you love beautiful things and all you dream about is designing a lovely home but you have no money to make it happen,” Ursula Carmona says, “you learn to DIY.” For the past eight years Ursula has been the voice, designer, and do-it-herself wiz behind the Instagram account and blog *Home Made by Carmona*.

And do it all she does. But her skills haven’t developed without work, dedication, and some swallow-your-fear moments. “My first time using a power tool, I was terrified,” she says. “I had an older circular saw from a garage sale and was worried the blade would fall off and possibly kill me. I made my husband watch from afar (just in case) and made my first cut.” Ever since, she’s been cutting and Kreg jigging and pocket screwing her way to a beautiful home, tackling ambitious projects like her living room built-ins and her sunny walk-in closet. “From that first cut forward, it has been my goal to grow and challenge my DIY skills.”

Ursula’s expertise took a giant leap when she, husband Orlando, and daughters Fiora, Priya, and Sayuri moved to a 16-acre property in North Carolina four years ago. The 2,500-square-foot, circa 1975 house had been on the market for more than a year





and needed lots of love, Ursula says. “But nothing needed to be torn down, which made it the perfect project for a novice DIYer.” Since the move, she’s gotten crash courses on wiring basic electrical, tackling minor plumbing, building headboards, and installing wainscoting. “Not everyone—myself included—can afford to hire someone, and not everyone has a helping hand either,” she says. “I want to share the process of a solo remodel, encouraging others along the way.”

Motivation might be Ursula’s superpower. “Everything I do and share is to encourage people who may be where I have been,” she says. Her followers inspire her to continue learning and to push past any fear of the unknown (or the garage sale circular saw). “When I power through that fear, I realize that in two days, two weeks, or two months, I will have a new skill and something I can be really proud of—something made with my own two hands.”

KITCHEN

Flora (opposite, far right) inherited her mom’s entrepreneurial spirit and spends her spare time writing a culinary blog, *Cooking with Carmona*. A large island gives the 16-year-old space to test and photograph her creations.

CLOSET OFFICE

This project began with a couple of lower cabinets Ursula found on the side of the road. It’s the go-to space for the kids to do homework and proof you don’t need a whole room to create an office.

“With DIY you don’t learn by observing, but by doing. That applies to everything in life. Don’t sit on the sidelines. Get out there.”

URSULA CARMONA





“How do I decorate on a budget and have it look cohesive?”

BRIDGET GLEASON
New York City

Instead of shopping exact matches, tweak pieces to complement each other. Paint or stain woods the same tones, and, Ursula says, add matching hardware so items feel like a set.

MAIN BEDROOM

Ursula admits that experts discourage having work spaces in the bedroom. But for her, the room is a quiet, private space where she can sketch and blog. The desk works as a mini office and nightstand.



PRIYA'S BEDROOM

Priya, 15, the resident artist, prints her designs on fabric. Ursula used yardage of Priya's floral design to upholster her headboard. Nailhead trim pairs with golden hardware on the rest of the decor.

LAUNDRY

In the laundry room, Ursula customized a prefab storage unit with cubbies on top that she painted to match. Golden hardware shines against the gray.

CLOSET

Ursula's boutique-like walk-in closet, with its natural light and statement wallpaper, is a follower favorite. A vanity she made by pairing a gold-framed wall mirror and rescued dresser gives the space a luxurious, feminine look. ■

“You can make a space look beautiful even with popcorn ceilings and carpet you'd rather not have.”

the FORTUNATE TABLE

CHEF **BELINDA SMITH-SULLIVAN**, AUTHOR OF *LET'S BRUNCH*, SHARES HER NEW YEAR'S DAY MENU OF SOUTHERN CHARMS. EACH DISH PROMISES GOOD LUCK, PROSPERITY, AND HAPPY GUESTS.

*Grapefruit,
Champagne &
Vodka Spritz*



*Fried Green
Tomatillos
& Aioli*



**GREENS
FOR
WEALTH**



“Black-eyed peas, collard greens, and some type of pork. These are all Southern traditions for good luck in the upcoming year.”

BELINDA
SMITH-SULLIVAN

*Buttermilk
Caramel Cake*



**BLACK-EYED
PEAS FOR
PROSPERITY
AND LUCK**
*Black-Eyed Pea
Succotash*



PORK FOR LUCK
*Cheesy Grits Cakes,
Roasted Pulled
Pork, and Braised
Cabbage Collards*





“Brunch

has always been my favorite form of entertaining,” Belinda Smith-Sullivan says. She follows the Southern tradition of hosting an annual New Year’s Day brunch. “And I make these dishes a lot, all during the year. If they’re good on New Year’s, then they just keep the good luck rolling.” Belinda took to the kitchen early. “I loved being around Mama when she was cooking, watching the love she put into it,” says the chef, entrepreneur, author, and pilot. After college, Belinda moved to New York City, where her friends were busy weekend nights but free for her to “fuss over” on Sunday afternoons. One of the appeals of brunch, Belinda contends, is that it’s more casual than a dinner party—the dishes are simpler, the guests relaxed, and no one has to get dressed up. Even if you’re not having folks over, she says, “you can do a nice brunch for your family. Make it a big deal.”



BUTTERMILK CARAMEL CAKE

A three-tier layer cake may not be a New Year’s Day staple, but we’re taking all brunch cues from Belinda. Her recipe stays true to the Southern classic—a tender yellow cake with a cooked, fudgelike caramel frosting—but we added some edible begonias for flair.

“Now, that is a Southern cake right there. The caramel is just very, very sweet. It’s almost too sweet, but you love it anyway.”

**RECIPES
BEGIN ON
PAGE 90.**



“Pigs root forward, so pork is a good luck sign—you’re focused on moving ahead.”



BLACK-EYED PEA SUCCOTASH
Adding black-eyed peas, which represent coins or pennies, makes this succotash New Year’s Day compatible. “People will be looking for the black-eyed peas,” Belinda says. “You gotta have them.”

CHEESY GRITS CAKES, ROASTED PULLED PORK, AND BRAISED CABBAGE COLLARDS
Traditionally, corn bread represents wealth in the new year. Instead, Belinda cuts a batch of thick cheesy grits into cakes to top with pork and greens.

GRAPEFRUIT, CHAMPAGNE & VODKA SPRITZ
Champagne splashed with grapefruit juice refreshes any Sunday brunch. At the holidays Belinda spikes her spritz with vodka and bitter Aperol for a splash of something special.

FRIED GREEN TOMATILLOS & AIOLI
“My dad would have fried green tomatoes just about every day.” But green tomatoes can be hard to come by in January, so try tomatillos instead. “It’s not a tomato,” Belinda says, but it’s “tomato-esque.” ■



FORMAL GEOMETRY

A combination of low-growing boxwood hedges, conical columns, and shapely globes gives garden designer Jon Carloffis' yard in Lexington, KY, its traditional look.

To mimic this style on a smaller scale, mix multiple shapes of boxwood, such as squared-off hedges with globes or cones, in a single planting bed.

the beauty of BOXWOOD

Drought-tolerant, deer-resistant, and endlessly versatile in garden design, this evergreen favorite earns its keep.



TEXTURE PLAY

Feathery no-mow fescue grows like a wind-whipped sea around boxwood globes in this informal Northern California front yard by landscape designer Scott Shrader. Sticking to an all-green palette emphasizes the contrast between plant textures and forms.



Boxwood has a long history in garden design, from ancient Rome to modern-day suburbia. Although tidy boxwood hedges will always be a favorite in traditional gardens, landscape designers are also using the evergreen in fresh ways. Paired with loose grasses and flowering perennials, boxwood can look informal and entirely new. Another recent shift in the world of boxwood is in the approach to care.

Rather than shearing the shrub into any shape you please, growers now say it's best to start with a cultivar that naturally grows into your desired shape and size, and then prune it selectively as it grows. This technique keeps your plant healthier, ultimately making it less susceptible to blight, a fungus that can wipe out the shrub. If you choose blight-tolerant cultivars and treat them right (see *page 82*), you can look forward to a long, happy life for the boxwoods in your garden.

PLANT PICKS

MEET YOUR MATCH

Start with a boxwood that has a natural size and shape similar to how you'd like to use it.



SMALL & SQUAT

'Compacta', 'Grace Hendrick Phillips', or 'Nana'



LARGE HEDGES

'John Baldwin', 'Rotundifolia', or 'Wintergreen'



UPRIGHT

'Fastigiata' or 'Graham Blandy'



MEDIUM ROUND

'Green Mound', or 'Green Velvet'

BY LAUREN DUNEC HOANG ILLUSTRATIONS LUCY TRUMAN

“BOXWOODS ARE MY BUILDING BLOCKS FOR DESIGN, ALLOWING ME TO CREATE STRUCTURE AND OUTDOOR ROOMS—THAT WON’T BE DEVoured BY DEER!” ANDREA FILIPPONE



GROUND RULES

Landscape architect, boxwood grower, and former director of the American Boxwood Society, Andrea Filippone shares her care tips.

1 CONDITIONS
Boxwoods thrive in full sun to part shade. Those in full shade won’t grow as vigorously. Plants in full sun—particularly in hot inland areas—can be at risk of scorching. Hardiness depends on variety, but most grow in Zones 5 to 9.

2 DRAINAGE
Plant in loose, quick-draining soil. Boxwoods don’t like soggy soil. Amend heavy clay soils with sand before planting.

3 SPACING
Spacing needs vary depending on mature size of cultivar. Avoid

planting too tightly, which crowds their shallow roots and prevents air circulation. Check the plant tags and err on the side of more room.

4 WATER
After planting and for the first couple of months while the plant gets established, water one to two times per week. After that keep an eye on the plant and the soil,

Filippone says. In general, aim to water the root ball well, then allow soil to dry out between waterings. Keep potted boxwood on irrigation, if possible, as soil can dry out quickly.

5 FERTILIZER
Filippone recommends using only organic fertilizers, such as compost or compost tea, to create healthy plants.

NEWGEN’S ‘FREEDOM’ IS ONE OF THE MOST PROMISING OF THE NEW BLIGHT-RESISTANT VARIETIES. »



BOXWOOD BLIGHT can be devastating. It starts as dark spots on leaves, which then brown and die, and quickly spreads to nearby boxwoods. To prevent it, avoid creating the moist conditions the fungus thrives in by not watering overhead and not shearing. Plant only cultivars known to be less susceptible to blight, and avoid the problematic ‘Suffruticosa’ English boxwood. To prevent potential spread between plants, dip pruners into a 10-percent bleach solution after use on each plant. Dispose of infected plants and the soil around it in trash bags; don’t compost.



A LITTLE ROMANCE

Garden designer Linda Vater drew inspiration for her own Oklahoma City garden from a public garden in England, creating two heart-shape boxwood hedges to outline vegetable and perennial beds.



1 | 2



DESIGNING WITH BOXWOOD

1 HEDGERS AND EDGERS A series of small boxwood balls forms a cottage-style hedge in this kitchen garden by garden designer Elizabeth Everdell. **2 CONTAINER ACCENTS** Keep it simple with topiary in classic terra-cotta. In a garden by Denler Hobart Gardens, cones and globes sit side by side. **3 PERENNIAL BACKDROP** A double layer of boxwood hedges in this Denler Hobart-designed garden give structure to this border of irises, roses, and lady's mantle. **4 ARCHITECTURAL SHAPES** Strong pyramidal forms softened by grassy perennials are an unexpected foundation planting by Jon Carloffitis.

3 | 4





The image shows a well-maintained garden with a series of interconnected, knee-high boxwood hedges. The hedges are shaped into a winding path that divides the garden into different sections. In the background, a large, white Tudor-style house with dark timber framing and a steep gabled roof is visible. A wooden trellis structure is covered in climbing plants, and a large, rounded terracotta pot sits in the center of the garden. The garden is filled with various plants, including purple flowers in the foreground and a variety of shrubs and trees in the background.

DEFINING SPACES

Boxwood hedges and globes can break up a garden into rooms or define planting beds. In the Lake Forest, IL, home of Frank Mariani of Mariani Landscape, hedges provide structure alongside unruly summer climbers and flowering perennials.

'GREEN VELVET' SHAPED INTO KNEE-HIGH HEDGES PROVIDES YEAR-ROUND INTEREST.





HOW TO PRUNE

Overpruning boxwoods can lead to plant decline and invite pests and diseases like blight. Filippone shares her best pruning practices.

PRUNE FOR SHAPE

Gently and selectively clip a few inches of growth by hand with pruners to control size and shape. Prune twice a year: once in the summer up until August and again in December (or wait until spring in cold-winter climates).

MAKE WINDOW CUTS

Next, make selective cuts with the pruners into the outer 6 inches to allow more light and air to reach the center: Angle the pruners into the shrub, making cuts where the plant begins branching. Remove the clipped branches as well any dead twigs.

AVOID SHEARING

Boxwoods push new growth where they're cut, so shearing—clipping only the outermost layer of leaves—leads to a dense outer layer that blocks light and air from reaching the center. That dark environment encourages pests and disease.

[PLANT PICKS]

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE...

If you're worried about blight or looking for a lower-maintenance plant, try one of these.



'GOLF BALL' PITTIOSPORUM

Tolerates heat and stays small.



JAPANESE HOLLY

Green or variegated; works in various climates.



ROSEMARY

Great for kitchen-garden borders.



YEW

Can be pruned as a topiary; cold resistant; toxic in large quantities to pets.

SOURCES

◆ AJF Design, New Jersey (ajfdesign.com/boxwood) ◆ Boxhill Farm and Nursery, Washington (boxhillfarm.com) ◆ Laurel Springs Nursery, North Carolina (laurelspringsboxwoods.com) ◆ Monrovia, nationwide (monrovia.com) ◆ Pleasant Run Nursery, New Jersey (pleasantrunnursery.com) ◆ Saunders Brothers, Virginia (saundersbrothers.com) ■

Q "With my entire family at home, how can I carve out a private place to work?"

TRACY KITTS
Cleveland, TN



Plywood, cut to size for the shelves and desktop, cost \$112 total.



WORK {FROM HOME} GOALS

NEW YORK PHOTOGRAPHER
DANA GALLAGHER CREATED A
HARDWORKING, TOTALLY
AFFORDABLE HOME OFFICE
WITH PLYWOOD AND IKEA HACKS.
HERE'S HOW SHE DID IT.

Photographer
Dana Gallagher
at her DIY desk.



I've always worked out of my home, but the last few months it has felt like I've been on my computer 24/7. So I needed my space to be more efficient and easy to use. I set up my office in a nook at the top of the stairs. Space is tight, so I needed a custom desk that wasn't too deep. I bought a pair of IKEA Finnvard trestle table legs for \$50 each, then asked the hardware store to cut a piece of plywood to 2½×8 feet to fill the space. I also had them cut strips of plywood to top \$5 IKEA brackets. Two shelves give me ample space to store business documents in lidded boxes. I don't file those papers because I'd rather be able to grab a box and take it to the kitchen table if I need a change of scenery. Neutral raw wood finishes and creamy white paint on the walls make my office fit with the rest of the house.

WORK HAPPY

Our strategies for getting the best out of your work-from-home routine.

START YOUR DAY IN A REGULAR WAY

If you were going to the office, you'd wake up at the same time every day, take a shower, get dressed, make your bed, and have breakfast. Treating WFH the same way helps you get in the zone.

STREAMLINE YOUR SPACE

Try to have only work essentials on your desk during work hours. Getting bogged down in household papers can create mental and physical clutter.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Dedicate a window of time for email and texts, then turn off your notifications when it's time to do a project. Use noise-canceling headphones to quiet commotion.

SCHEDULE BREAKS

Take a walk around the block.
Eat lunch away from your computer.
Do five minutes of yoga. Regular brain breaks motivate and improve focus.

END YOUR DAY

Set an alarm so work doesn't roll into family time.



INSPIRATION BOARD

The display board is made from a \$27 sheet of Homasote 440, a fiberboard I bought and had cut to size at a hardware store. I screwed it to the wall then covered the fasteners with grommets. I hang pieces that make me happy.



SOFT TOUCH

A rosy sheepskin transforms the wood dining chair into a comfortable perch for longer projects. It also gives the industrial-looking raw wood finishes softness and texture. It has become my cat Lucy's favorite spot.



HOLDALLS

I raided the house for jars to hold washi tape, pencils, and paintbrushes. The glass jars are nice for being able to see exactly what I am looking for, plus they feel lighter and airier. Having my supplies out inspires my creativity.



PRACTICAL STORAGE

My desk doesn't have drawers, so I needed storage. The Poppin file cabinet was a splurge at \$250 but worth it for the sleek look. It comes in a range of colors. I keep printer paper in translucent drawers so I can see when it's low.

shop the look

OFFICE MATES

Smart buys minimize clutter and boost focus to turn your workspace into a powerhouse of productivity.



Lexington 3-Tier Rolling Cart in Mint, \$30; michaels.com



Cowin E7 Active Noise Cancelling Bluetooth Headphones, \$70; amazon.com



BH&G Collection® Small Water Hyacinth Storage Basket in Gray, \$14 each; walmart.com/BHG



Riggad, an LED work lamp with wireless charging dock, \$60; ikea.com

I wanted my office to feel organized and comfortable, not distracting.

DANA GALLAGHER



Paxton Task Chair in Tan, \$149; polyandbark.com



Tidy cables and surge protectors in a CableBox. \$30; bluelounge.com

Blue-Light Blocking Readers. Ellie Green and Elwood Blue, \$40 each; gabriel-simone.com



[SPACE-SAVERS] BARELY-THERE DESKS

Blink and you'll miss them. These compact workstations squeeze into tight spaces and are easy to overlook when you're off the clock.



MOUNT ON THE WALL
Its slim profile takes up little space when folded shut.
Trenton Fold Out Table, Rustic Wood, \$299; potterybarn.com



TUCK IN A CORNER
Got an empty corner? Turn it into an office with this angular desk.
Leick 1-Drawer Corner Computer Desk, \$269; lampsplus.com



CLOSE TO CONCEAL
The front folds down to support your laptop and up to conceal supplies.
Safavieh Xander Modern Secretary Desk, \$211; englishelm.com ■



RECIPES FROM PAGES 76-79

THE FORTUNATE TABLE

Recipes by Belinda Smith-Sullivan, chef and author of *Let's Brunch*.

GRAPEFRUIT, CHAMPAGNE & VODKA SPRITZ

START TO FINISH 10 min.

- 1 oz. (2 Tbsp.) Aperol
- 4 oz. (½ cup) Champagne or other sparkling wine, chilled
- 1½ oz. (3 Tbsp.) fresh grapefruit juice
- ½ oz. (1 Tbsp.) vodka
- Club soda, chilled

In a tall glass pour Aperol, Champagne, grapefruit juice, and vodka. Add a splash of club soda. Stir gently; garnish with grapefruit slice or twist. Makes 1 cocktail.

PER COCKTAIL 162 cal, 8 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 1 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 1 g pro

FRIED GREEN TOMATILLOS & AIOLI

HANDS-ON TIME 20 min.

TOTAL TIME 1 hr. 5 min.

- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1½ tsp. blackened seasoning or Cajun seasoning*
- 2 lb. fresh tomatillos, husked, or green tomatoes, sliced ½ inch thick
- 1 large egg yolk, at room temp**
- ½ lemon, juiced
- 1 garlic clove

- ¾ to 1 cup olive oil
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1¼ cups yellow cornmeal
- Canola oil for frying, as needed
- 2 scallions, sliced

1. In a large bowl mix buttermilk with blackened seasoning. Add tomatillos; let stand 30 minutes. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper; add a wire rack.

2. For aioli: In a food processor combine yolk, lemon juice, garlic, and a pinch *kosher salt*; pulse a few times. With processor running, slowly add enough olive oil until sauce is thick. Add cayenne and pulse a few more times; chill.

3. For tomatillos: In a medium shallow bowl combine the cornmeal, ½ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. *ground black pepper*. One by one, take a tomatillo slice, shake off excess buttermilk, and dredge in cornmeal, making sure each side is thoroughly coated. Place slices on rack.

4. In an extra-large skillet add canola oil to about ½ inch deep. Heat over medium. Working in batches, fry tomatillos until golden brown, 1½ to 2 minutes per side. Continue until all are cooked, adding oil as needed. Drain on a platter lined with paper towels. Garnish with scallions and serve with aioli. Serves 10 to 12.

***TIP** If you don't have one of these blends, stir together a little paprika, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper.

****TIP** Use a pasteurized egg's yolk if you have a compromised immune system.

EACH SERVING 437 cal, 40 g fat (4 g sat fat), 19 mg chol, 79 mg sodium, 19 g carb, 3 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 3 g pro

BLACK-EYED PEA SUCCOTASH

HANDS-ON TIME 10 min.

TOTAL TIME 40 min.

- 1 lb. frozen black-eyed peas
- 1 lb. frozen butter beans or lima beans
- 5 strips bacon, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 1 cup okra, fresh or frozen and thawed, sliced into ½-inch pieces

- 1 medium red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 medium jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups corn kernels, fresh or frozen and thawed
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 cup halved cherry and/or grape tomatoes
- 2 scallions, trimmed and sliced

1. Place peas and beans in a large saucepan with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil over medium and cook 30 minutes or until tender; drain.

2. In an extra-large cast-iron skillet cook bacon pieces over medium until crisp. Set aside to drain on a paper towel.

3. Reserve 2 Tbsp. bacon drippings in skillet. Sauté onion, okra, bell pepper, and jalapeños in skillet over medium until onion is soft, 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic and cook an additional minute.

4. Add corn and bacon. Season to taste with *kosher salt* and *ground black pepper*; cook an additional 5 minutes. Stir in peas and beans, butter, tomatoes, and scallions. Heat through. Keep warm until ready to serve. Serves 8.

EACH SERVING 265 cal, 9 g fat (4 g sat fat), 16 mg chol, 152 mg sodium, 36 g carb, 9 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 12 g pro

CHEESY GRITS CAKES

HANDS-ON TIME 15 min.

TOTAL TIME 5 hr., includes chilling

- 4 cups milk or chicken stock
- 1 cup stone-ground grits
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper

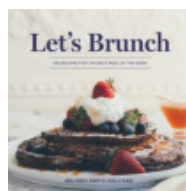
Roasted Pulled Pork and/or Braised Cabbage Collards (page 92, optional)

1. In a 4- to 6-qt. pot bring milk to a boil over medium and add ½ tsp. *kosher salt*. (Omit salt if using stock.)

Gradually stir in grits and reduce heat to low.

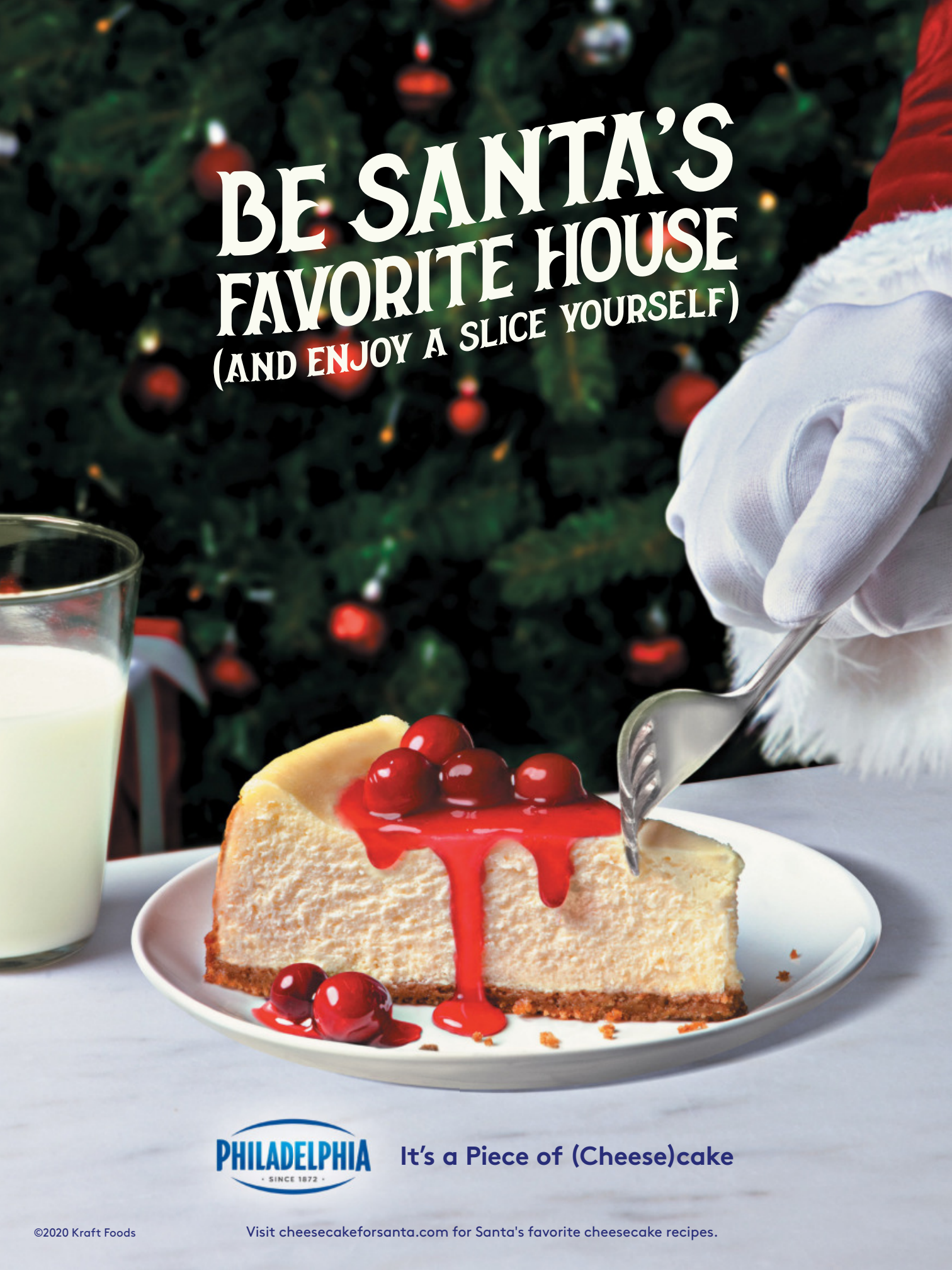
Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 45 minutes.

Mixture will be very thick and



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**BE SANTA'S
FAVORITE HOUSE
(AND ENJOY A SLICE YOURSELF)**



It's a Piece of (Cheese)cake

1 BOWL & YOU'RE GOOD TILL LUNCH

With 2% milk, at least half of adults had a lower desire to eat than before breakfast for 3 1/2 hours.



cookbook

pull away from sides of pan.

Remove from heat and stir in cheese, butter, chives, cayenne, and 1/4 tsp.

black pepper.

2. Spread grits in an even layer in a 13×9-inch baking pan lined with parchment paper. Let cool completely. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm (at least 4 hours). Using a 2-inch cookie cutter or a sharp knife, cut into cakes; refrigerate until ready to serve (up to 3 days).

3. To serve, transfer cakes to a baking sheet lined with foil. Broil 5 inches from heat 5 to 7 minutes until lightly golden brown. If desired, top with Roasted Pulled Pork and/or Braised Cabbage Collards. Makes 20 cakes.

PER GRITS CAKE 75 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 10 mg chol, 70 mg sodium, 9 g carb, 3 g sugars, 3 g pro

BRAISED CABBAGE COLLARDS

"Cabbage collards are a variety of collards well-known and grown in the Carolinas but have only now spread to other states," Belinda says. "They're more tender and milder than regular collards, but you can always use regular." We tested with regular collards and cooked them about 1 hour.

HANDS-ON TIME 20 min.

TOTAL TIME 1 hr. 5 min.

- 2 bunches cabbage collard greens or collard greens***
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic**
- 2 to 3 cups unsalted chicken or vegetable stock**
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper**
- 1 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar**

1. Strip greens from stems and rinse thoroughly to remove dirt and sand. Discard stems. Working a few at a time, stack leaves on top of each other, roll up, and cut into 1/2-inch slices. Set aside.

2. Heat 2 Tbsp. *vegetable oil* in a Dutch oven over medium-low. Cook garlic slowly to extract flavor but not brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Gradually add greens to pan, a handful at a time; stir. Greens will cook down quickly. Add 2 cups stock,

1 Tbsp. *sugar*, and crushed red pepper. Simmer, covered, until tender, 45 to 60 minutes, adding additional stock as necessary. Stir in vinegar; add *kosher salt* to taste. Serves 8.

***TIP** Collard greens can sometimes be found packaged already stemmed and sliced. Use two 10-oz. packages.

EACH SERVING 67 cal, 4 g fat (1 g sat fat), 7 mg chol, 243 mg sodium, 4 g carb, 1 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 4 g pro

ROASTED PULLED PORK

Roasting low and slow (8 to 10 hours) delivers super-tender results. Serve with Cheesy Grits Cakes and Braised Cabbage Collards, or pile it on buns with your favorite barbecue sauce.

HANDS-ON TIME 20 min.

TOTAL TIME 8 hr. 50 min., plus overnight

- 1/2 cup salt**
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar**
- 2 bay leaves**
- 4 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 Tbsp. whole peppercorns**
- 1 5- to 7-lb. boneless Boston butt (pork shoulder)**
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. smoked paprika**
- 1 Tbsp. chili powder**
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder**
- 1 tsp. ground cumin**
- 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper**

1. Brining: In an oversize resealable plastic bag or a large plastic container with a tight-fitting lid, combine the salt, sugar, bay leaves, garlic, and peppercorns. Add just enough *water* to mix and dissolve ingredients. Place roast in bag and fill with enough water to completely cover. Place bag in a leakproof container and refrigerate overnight, but not longer than 24 hours.

2. Seasoning: Preheat oven to 250°F. Remove roast from brine and pat dry. In a small bowl combine brown sugar, paprika, chili powder, garlic powder, cumin, cayenne, 1 tsp. *kosher salt*, and 1/2 tsp. *coarse black pepper*. Rub mixture all over roast. Place on a rack in a roasting pan. Insert an ovenproof thermometer in thickest part of roast. Add 1/2 cup water to bottom of pan.

3. Cooking: Place roasting pan, uncovered, in oven. Bake until internal temperature reaches 200°F, 8 to 10 hours. Add ½ cup water to bottom of pan every 1 to 2 hours. Remove meat from pan, reserving juices, and wrap well in foil; let rest 30 to 45 minutes.

4. Using two forks, shred roast, place in a serving dish, and moisten with some of the reserved baking juices. Serves 8.

EACH SERVING 602 cal, 29 g fat (11 g sat fat), 236 mg chol, 1,449 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 1 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 67 g pro

BUTTERMILK CARAMEL CAKE

HANDS-ON TIME 30 min.

TOTAL TIME 3 hr.

2½ cups all-purpose flour

1½ tsp. baking powder

2 tsp. baking soda

2½ cups unsalted butter, at room temp

3 cups granulated sugar

3 large eggs, at room temp

1 tsp. vanilla

2¾ cups buttermilk, at room temp

1½ cups packed light brown sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat three 8-inch round cake pans with *nonstick cooking spray*; line bottoms with parchment. In a medium bowl stir together flour, baking powder, ½ tsp. baking soda, and 1 tsp. *kosher salt*.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer beat 1 cup butter on medium-high until fluffy and a pale yellow (1 minute). Add 1½ cups granulated sugar; beat another 3 minutes, scraping bowl as needed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla and beat well. Scrape down sides of bowl. Reduce mixer speed to lowest setting; add flour mixture and 1½ cups buttermilk alternately, beginning and ending with flour. Divide batter evenly among pans. Bake about 25 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean. Transfer to cooling racks and let cool in the pans 10 minutes. Invert layers onto cooling racks, remove paper, and let cool completely. If the layers are rounded on top, trim flat.

3. Place a rack inside a sheet pan lined

with parchment. Place a cardboard cake round covered in foil on rack. Invert one cake layer onto round.

4. For frosting: In a 6-qt. heavy-bottom pot combine the brown sugar with the remaining 1½ cups granulated sugar, 1½ cups buttermilk, 1½ cups butter, and 1½ tsp. baking soda. Cook over medium, stirring frequently, until mixture comes to a boil. Watch carefully; once it comes to a boil, the mixture will foam up. Lower heat as necessary to prevent foaming over. Cook, uncovered, to 235°F on a candy thermometer (30 to 35 minutes). Adjust heat as necessary to maintain a moderate, steady boil across surface. Remove from heat. Using a wooden spoon, beat until creamy, thick, and spreadable (8 to 10 minutes). Mixture will become lighter in color and start to lose its gloss.

5. Working quickly before frosting starts to harden, spread some frosting on top of the cake layer on rack. Top it with a second cake layer and ice it. Place remaining layer on top. Pour frosting over top and allow it to drip down the sides, spreading evenly. If frosting starts to harden, warm over low. Spoon any frosting that pools at the base back over the sides. For a smooth finish, dip spatula in hot water and go over the top and sides of cake. Serves 12.

EACH SERVING 776 cal, 40 g fat (25 g sat fat), 151 mg chol, 463 mg sodium, 100 g carb, 1 g fiber, 80 g sugars, 7 g pro

RECIPES FROM PAGES 56-63

A COOK'S GUIDE TO FISH

CRISPY SEASONED FISH & CHIPS WITH GREEN OLIVE TARTAR SAUCE

If you love sweet potatoes, substitute half the russets with sweets for a two-tone side.

HANDS-ON TIME 25 min.

TOTAL TIME 55 min.

2 lb. russet potatoes

1 tsp. garlic salt or salt

1 tsp. smoked paprika

10 LAYERS OF WHEAT IN EVERY BITE



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SILENCE YOUR GROWL



- 1½ cups panko
- 2 Tbsp. fresh thyme or 2 tsp. dried thyme, crushed
- 1 tsp. celery seeds
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
- 2 eggs
- 3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ lb. fresh or frozen skinless whitefish fillets, cut into 6 serving-size pieces, thawed if frozen
- Green Olive Tartar Sauce (below)
- Malt vinegar (optional)

1. Place a baking pan on the top rack of the oven; place another rack in the bottom third. Preheat oven to 500°F.
 2. Cut unpeeled potatoes lengthwise into ½-inch sticks and let stand in a large bowl of ice water 5 minutes; drain thoroughly and pat dry completely. Toss with ¼ cup vegetable oil, ½ tsp. garlic salt, and the smoked paprika. Place on the preheated baking pan and spread out into thin layer. Bake 15 minutes. Stir potatoes; leave in oven.
 3. Meanwhile, coat a wire rack with nonstick cooking spray and place on a baking pan. In an extra-large skillet heat an additional 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil over medium. Add panko, thyme, and celery seeds. Cook and stir 2 to 3 minutes or until golden. Remove to a shallow dish and stir in cayenne; cool.
 4. In another shallow dish whisk together eggs and mustard. Put flour in another shallow dish.
 5. Season fish with the remaining ½ tsp. garlic salt. Dip fish in flour to coat, then egg mixture, then panko mixture. Place on rack in pan.
 6. Reduce oven to 425°F. Place fish in oven on the lower rack. (Leave potatoes on the upper rack.) Bake 15 minutes or until fish is golden and flakes easily when tested with a fork (145°F to 155°F) and potatoes are browned and crispy on the edges. Serve with Green Olive Tartar Sauce and, if desired, malt vinegar. Serves 6.
- EACH SERVING** 484 cal, 18 g fat (3 g sat fat), 118 mg chol, 393 mg sodium, 49 g carb, 3 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 31 g pro
- GREEN OLIVE TARTAR SAUCE** In a small bowl stir together ¾ cup mayonnaise

with olive oil, 2 to 3 Tbsp. chopped pimiento-stuffed green olives or pitted green olives, 1 Tbsp. finely chopped red onion, 2 tsp. chopped fresh dill or 1 tsp. dried dill, 2 tsp. lemon juice or malt vinegar, and ½ tsp. smoked paprika or lemon zest. Chill, covered, 30 minutes or up to 1 week. Makes 1 cup.

FLOUNDER GRENOBLOISE

Classic grenobloise is a French sauce of brown butter, capers, and lemon. We replaced the lemon juice with wine, but you can swap one for the other.

START TO FINISH 20 min.

- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ lb. skinless, boneless flounder, striped sea bass, or sole filets
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 2 Tbsp. capers plus 1 tsp. pickling liquid
- ¼ cup dry white wine or lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 small lemon, thinly sliced

1. In a shallow dish combine the flour, 1 tsp. kosher salt, and ½ tsp. ground black pepper. Dip fish in flour mixture to coat. Shake off excess flour so only a dusting remains.
 2. In an extra-large skillet heat 2 Tbsp. butter and 1 tsp. olive oil over medium-high until hot and foamy. Immediately add fish; cook 2 minutes or until bottoms are golden. Turn fish; spoon on capers and pickling liquid. Cook 2 minutes more or until bottoms are golden and slightly crispy and fish just flakes when tested with a fork. Remove fish to a platter; tent with foil to keep warm.
 3. Add remaining 1 Tbsp. butter to skillet. Cook and stir until butter is just golden brown. Remove from heat. Carefully add wine to skillet; return to heat. Cook and stir mixture about 1 minute or until bubbly and slightly reduced. Pour pan juices over fish. Top with parsley and serve with lemon slices. Serves 6.
- EACH SERVING** 188 cal, 9 g fat (4 g sat fat), 66 mg chol, 601 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 1 g fiber, 1 g sugars, 16 g pro

ORIGAMI FISH PACKETS

Use ½- to ¾-inch-thick fillets of halibut, cod, red snapper, or salmon.

HANDS-ON TIME 25 min.

TOTAL TIME 35 min.

- 2 cups cooked and cooled grain, such as brown or white rice, farro, and/or a lentil-grain blend
- 4 6-oz. skinless, boneless fish fillets or 1½-lb. skinless, boneless fish fillet cut into 4 portions
- ¼ cup purchased pesto (sun-dried tomato or basil)
- 2 cups vegetables, such as thinly sliced carrots, bell pepper, zucchini, green onions; halved sugar snap peas; very thinly sliced fennel and/or onion; and/or blanched* broccoli or cauliflower florets or green beans
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- Orange or lemon wedges

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut four 20×12-inch pieces parchment paper. Fold each in half crosswise (10×12, like a book) and unfold. On one side of each sheet of parchment, layer ½ cup cooked grain and a piece of fish. Spread pesto evenly over fish. Top evenly with vegetables and butter.

2. To seal: Fold other parchment half over fillings. Starting at one folded corner, make a 1-inch fold toward middle and crease. Continue making overlapping folds to seal the three open edges, forming a half oval.



EASY SWAP

If you don't have parchment on hand, use Reynolds Wrap® Non-Stick Foil to make the packets.

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REYNOLDS WRAP®

When packet is completely sealed, twist remaining parchment at the end; fold under packet. Transfer to a large baking sheet.

3. Bake about 10 minutes (see doneness test, below). Fish should be opaque but moist throughout. Immediately transfer packets to plates. Carefully cut open tops of packets. Serve with orange or lemon wedges. Makes 4 packets.

***TIP** To blanch heartier vegetables, cook in boiling water about 3 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and plunge veggies into a

bowl of ice water; drain.

FISH DONENESS TEST

When parchment starts to brown and puff, the fish should be done. Double-check using one of these methods:

■ **SKEWER** Before cooking, poke a wooden skewer into a fillet so you can feel the resistance of the raw fish. After 10 minutes baking, poke a skewer into a fillet through the packet. The skewer should have little to no resistance.

■ **FORK** Carefully unfold one side of a packet. The fish should just flake when tested with a fork. Rewrap to serve.

■ **THERMOMETER** Insert a thermometer into fish through the packet; it should register 145°F to 155°F.

EACH SERVING 421 cal, 13 g fat (6 g sat fat), 98 mg chol, 342 mg sodium, 38 g carb, 5 g fiber, 6 g sugar, 37 g pro ■

SWEEPSTAKES RULES

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46%

That's how much you can lower your odds of forming excess calcium in your arteries—a precursor of heart attack and stroke—by eating at least 45 grams of cruciferous vegetables daily.

That might sound like a lot, but it's only about ¼ cup cooked broccoli or ½ cup shredded cabbage.

Cruciferous veggies (which also include Brussels sprouts and cauliflower) are high in vitamin K, which may prevent calcium deposits, researchers say.

Q “What is the best way to quit smoking?”

INGRID JACOBS, Columbia, SC



Research shows that a combo of treatment (e.g., nicotine replacement patches) and counseling is most effective.

One review of studies found smokers who did both were 74 percent more likely to kick the habit. Talk to your doctor about what treatments might work for you. Get more tips at smokefree.gov.

Indoor heat during winter can exacerbate dry eye, a condition in which you don't produce enough or quality tears.

16.4 million Americans have dry eye disease.

Signs include stinging, burning, and sensitivity.

Try using a humidifier, and take breaks every 20 minutes from screen time (not blinking as often can worsen the condition).

JANUARY

10

is National Cut Your Energy Costs Day. Look around your home to see where you can make changes.

Start by plugging small appliances (computers, toasters) into a power strip you can turn off. Also make sure the water heater is 120°F or below, and lower the thermostat to 68°F during the day. Energy.gov has more tips.



JANUARY 24 IS NATIONAL COMPLIMENT DAY. FIND A REASON TO **GIVE SOMEONE A SHOUT-OUT.**

It can be as simple as an appreciative “Thanks for being a great friend.” Research shows that both the giver and receiver get an emotional boost. In fact, one study showed that getting a compliment has the same positive effect as receiving a cash reward. ■

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smart money moves

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You told us your biggest money concerns revolve around adjusting to possible shifts—reduced income, a dip in the economy, a new job. We went to the experts for guidance that will keep you protected.



STRETCH YOUR MONTHLY BUDGET

Before you tap into savings to deal with an uncertain financial future, try these strategies.

stop paying for what you don't use

Start by looking at your monthly debit and credit card statements, says Tiffany Aliche, financial educator and founder of the website Budgetnista. "What are the recurring charges, even the small ones? Are you really using these services or subscriptions? (Haven't watched Hulu in months?) It doesn't matter how cheap, cancel it and put the money toward savings or something you really need."

open another bank account

Designating an account for your spending money for the month can help you stay on track. Calculate your monthly income minus fixed expenses—mortgage, car payments, retirement savings (ideally 20 percent of your gross income). Divide what's left by four weeks, and that's what

you can spend on a weekly basis. Put that money in the separate spending account. (Make sure a certain balance isn't required to avoid fees.) Then when you're at, say, the grocery store, check available funds.

negotiate— with everyone

"Go to your landlord, your credit card company. Ask how they can help," says Jill Schlesinger, C.F.P., CBS News business



CUT BACK RATHER THAN CUT OUT

Can you reduce how often you do activities or use services you enjoy? For example, order takeout once a week instead of three times.

analyst and host of the *Jill on Money* podcast and radio show. You might say, "My income has gone down, and I'm having a hard time making payments. What options do you have that could help temporarily?" Lenders may waive late fees or give forbearance, i.e., let you delay payments for a set time. (You'll have to pay the money eventually.) Take notes during the call so you can research options; follow up within a day.



"We're having financial challenges due to the pandemic. Should we sell our home and downsize?"

MARIE, New York

If you expect your finances to recover in a few months, you may not need to make a permanent decision like selling your home. On the other hand, if you think you'll be in the same—or a worse—situation a year from now, consider the idea carefully. If a recent dip in income revealed that your mortgage has actually always been bigger than it should be, downsizing might make sense,

says Hilary Hendershott, C.F.P., president and chief adviser of Hendershott Wealth Management and host of *Profit Boss Radio*. "If you're spending half your monthly income on your mortgage, it's too much." Also consider: Where will you live next? Will you sell your house and rent for a while to keep your assets liquid? Figure fees like closing and moving costs into your calculations.

SAVE WHAT YOU CAN

Q “How can I save money for retirement without an employer-sponsored 401(k) plan?”

ASHLEY, Michigan



traditional IRA are tax-deductible in the year they're made; withdrawals from a Roth during retirement aren't taxed.

research options

The best way to save for your future is to put away as much as you can—starting today. The most effective way to do that is to put money into a retirement plan you can't touch until you retire (or you reach age 59½) without paying a penalty.

Even if your job doesn't offer a 401(k), there are many great options you can set up on your own, including an IRA (individual retirement account) and a Roth IRA. The IRS ([irs.gov/retirement-plans](https://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans)) has a comprehensive explanation of the differences between types of accounts. Both offer tax advantages, but one big distinction is that qualifying contributions to a

automate contributions

This is the key to consistently building savings, whether it's an emergency fund, a retirement fund, or even a vacation fund. "Tech has made it much easier to save successfully," says Schlesinger, author of *The Dumb Things Smart People Do with Their Money*. Start with as little as \$5, \$10, or \$20 that's automatically transferred weekly or monthly from checking to an IRA, Roth IRA, or investment account. "Start small so you form the habit," Schlesinger says. "It's really easy to keep once you do."



SAVINGS GOALS

Experts estimate the average person will need 80 percent of their preretirement income every year after retirement. ■

How to resist the urge to withdraw funds from your 401(k).

Think of it this way: It's the job of your younger self to look after your older self, Aliche says. That can be hard to remember in the moment, so she suggests giving your older self a name and a persona and thinking of her when you contemplate early withdrawal from retirement savings to pay bills. "My older self is Wanda, and she is sassy," Aliche says. Once you have your persona, ask yourself, *Would I go to my grandmother's purse and take money out for whatever I think I need right now?* "If you take it, you're stealing from your future," Aliche says. "It's better to do the hard work to fix the problem now—spend less money, get a side hustle, tap into an emergency fund—rather than dig yourself into a ditch in the future."

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PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES
SERVINGS: 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (10 oz.) pkg. Green Giant® Veggie Spirals Spaghetti Squash
- 1 lb. ground turkey or chicken
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 cups Victoria® Marinara Sauce
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

DIRECTIONS

1. Cook Green Giant® Veggie Spirals Spaghetti Squash according to package directions; drain.
2. Meanwhile, cook turkey and garlic over medium heat in large nonstick skillet until turkey is cooked through. Stir in Marinara Sauce and simmer 5 minutes.
3. Spoon Spaghetti Squash over turkey mixture then dollop with ricotta and sprinkle with mozzarella. Cover and cook 2 minutes or until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with basil.



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virtual vet visits

Over the past few years, veterinarians have started to embrace telehealth visits, and since the pandemic began, they've become more popular. What you need to know if you're considering this option.

what is a telehealth visit?

A virtual visit allows veterinarians to “see” and possibly diagnose pets through a videoconference call (think Zoom) or an app. “It can be useful in situations involving minor issues like pink eye, a runny nose, or a toenail infection,” says Justine Lee, D.V.M., expert for Pumpkin Pet Insurance. If your cat or dog is in good health, you might even be able to have their regular wellness exam virtually due to the pandemic, Lee says.

what's their best use?

Telehealth visits are best used as a supplement to in-office care, not as a substitute. If your pet has an issue that requires first aid—bleeding, vomiting, breathing problems—call your vet immediately.

For nonemergency situations, virtual visits can be useful in determining the next

course of action. For instance, if your dog or cat has developed a limp or a skin issue, the vet can assess how urgent the situation is. Roughly 25 percent of problems can be managed or resolved through virtual visits; 75 percent of cases require a follow-up physical exam or test, says Shlomo Freiman, D.V.M., chief veterinary officer and cofounder of Petriage, a telemedicine app that helps pet owners assess the urgency of care and connect with their vet's office remotely.

Some telehealth platforms also offer communication via text, which

is good because of its flexibility. For instance, you can take a photo or video rather than hoping your pet cooperates while you are on a video call.

the pros and cons

A telehealth visit can be less expensive than an in-person one. They can also be more time-effective if the vet is able to make a diagnosis by looking at the animal, getting the appropriate medical history, and asking the right questions.

The big downside is that the vet can't do a thorough physical exam or run tests (like blood work or X-rays) to identify any internal issues. That can limit their ability to make a proper diagnosis, Lee says. But if the vet suspects your pet has a serious problem, she'll ask you to come in.



“How can I get the most out of a telehealth visit?”

1 Before the appointment, take photos and/or videos of the issue.

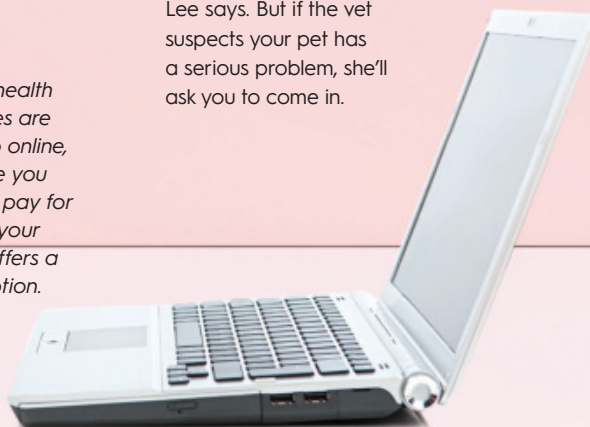
2 Make sure your Internet connection is strong and your device has a working camera.

3 Compile your pet's medical history, including a list of current medications and how long the issue has been occurring.

4 Set yourself and your pet up in a quiet, well-lit room. ■



Many telehealth vet services are cropping up online, but before you subscribe or pay for one, ask your vet if she offers a virtual option.



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Q “When we’re stuck at home and also stressed, how do we stick to eating healthy?”

DARCIA
Michigan

HOW TO STOP stress eating

It’s normal to feel a little more tense these days, but diving into a bag of chips may not be the best remedy. Five strategies to avoid eating your feelings.

1 check your hunger

Before you open the fridge or rummage through the pantry, stop and ask yourself, *Am I truly hungry?*

“Real physiological hunger will sometimes also have physical symptoms, such as a growling tummy or light-headedness. These intensify with time and won’t go away until you eat,” says Cordialis Msora-Kasago, R.D.N., a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. So wait five to 10 minutes; if you’re still hungry, have a healthy snack like veggies with hummus, a handful of nuts, or whole grain crackers.

SCHEDULE MEALTIMES

Working from home? Keep a regular schedule, taking a set lunch and snack break as if you were in the office.

2 sip a cup of herbal tea

The variety doesn’t matter; the key is that you’re doing something to distract yourself

before opening the bag of chips, plus allowing time for the urge to eat to pass. “Go to a chair you love, close your eyes for a moment, and inhale deeply,” says Deborah Kesten, M.P.H., a holistic nutrition researcher and author of *Whole Person Integrative Eating*. Then sip slowly, which is easier when it’s a hot beverage. Sipping decaf tea (or water with lemon) is a smart move because thirst is often mistaken for hunger.

3 get enough vitamin B

Being deficient in vitamin B can make you more prone to depression and anxiety, which in turn can increase cravings for starchy carbs that up the levels of the feel-good brain chemical serotonin. Incorporating vitamin B-rich foods—including unrefined grains (like oats, brown rice, and quinoa), fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, and peas—in your daily diet can help keep your mood and tension levels in check so you’re less likely to find yourself stressed out and wanting to eat.

4 walk it off

“Every time you eat when you’re tense, a pattern is created in your brain, which becomes comfortable with that pattern as a default for dealing with stress,” says Brigid Titgemeier, R.D.N., a functional medicine dietitian. Breaking that habit might not be easy, but it’s doable. Each time you take a brisk walk or practice deep breathing instead of reaching for a cookie, you’re leveraging what’s called neuroplasticity, or the ability to change networks in the brain by making new connections.

USE A BOWL

When you do snack, portion out a certain amount in a bowl. That way you track how much you eat and think twice before having seconds.

5 keep healthy foods handy

If, after not eating for a while after tension hits, you still feel hungry, increase the odds that you’ll reach

for something healthy by keeping those foods in plain sight. For example, keep a stash of baby carrots, bell pepper slices, and celery sticks front and center in the fridge. Place a bowl of fresh fruit on the kitchen counter. You’re more likely to reach for the (fiber- and nutrient-rich) apple if you don’t have to dig through the produce drawer to find it. ■

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"Creating new products and interiors go hand in hand. If I can't find a specific style or look in a product, it inspires me to create my own design," Sarah says. Her rug and pillow collection with Lulu and Georgia features sketched patterns in neutral earthy hues and tonal textures. luluandgeorgia.com



"When I need to recharge my creativity, I try to connect to nature. I love going on foraging walks with my kids. Justina Blakeney's *@facethefoliage* flowery portrait project on Instagram inspired me and the kids to make our own nature portraits." Flowers are scarce during winter around Sarah's Michigan home, so they used pine needles, dried leaves, and seedpods.

“It’s important to balance digital inspiration, like Pinterest or Instagram, with going outdoors and exploring nature—a beautiful stone or a feather.”



FOR DESIGNING WARM, PARED-BACK INTERIORS USING UPSCALE DIY PROJECTS AND AFFORDABLE TRICKS.

Sarah first came on our radar eight years ago when her Venice, CA, bungalow remodel was everywhere on Pinterest. Since then she has designed interiors for tastemakers Mandy Moore, Joy Cho, and Garance Doré. She also creates rugs, wallpaper, tiles, and cabinets—all with her self-described “modern, relaxed, and a little unexpected” aesthetic.



"I get my love of DIY from my dad. He also taught me the importance of learning by doing." When her son, Archie, wanted bunk beds, Sarah created a plywood arch to frame the sleep space.



"I always have a supply of painters tape on hand. I use it for basic projects as well as detailed paint patterns, like the ceiling in Archie's bedroom (*above*)."



"I have a collection of cutting boards that my dad and I made when I first started my own business. I designed the boards, he cut the wood, then I sanded and finished." ■

“I started out as a graphic designer. That was my plan A. I’m on plan M now.”

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